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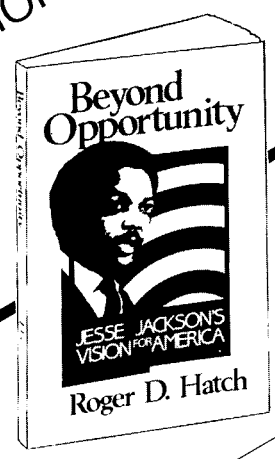

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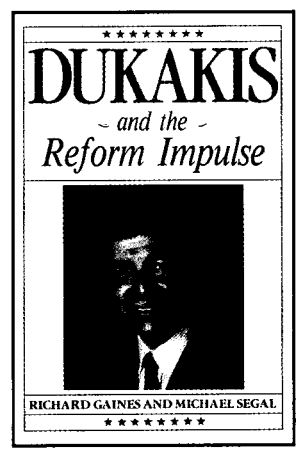

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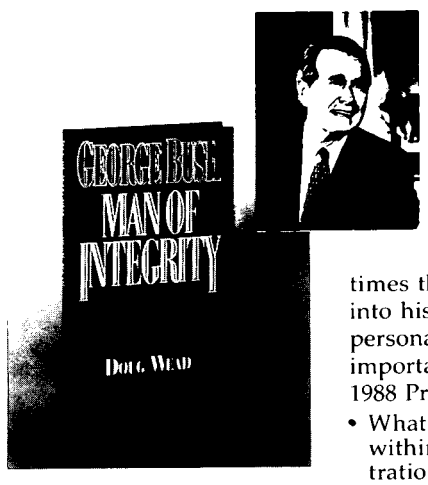

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Is that a good deal for the American taxpayer? Do we get our money's worth?

What are the facts?

■ Israel is the only genuinely democratic state in the Middle East. It is committed to freedom and equality, and the rule of law. It embodies the fundamental values that are in tune with those of America and that America has traditionally supported.

■ Israel's military and political importance in the Middle East and its strategic position stabilize that entire area, including the oil fields of the Persian Gulf. It is a bulwark against the inroads of the Soviet Union. It is a most reliable partner in the promotion of Western strategic interests and in the stabilization of the Middle East. 25% to 30% of its budget goes for defense, compared to 7% in the U.S. and less than 1% in Japan. Israel has one of the best armies in the world. Its navy and air force are the major deterrent forces in the eastern Mediterranean against Soviet intrusion.

■ Israel effectively secures NATO's southeastern flank, without having a single American soldier stationed in its territory. Still, the superb military installations, the air and sea lift capabilities, the equipment and food storage capacity, and the trained manpower to maintain and repair sophisticated U.S. equipment are instantly at hand in Israel. It is the only country in the area that makes itself available to the United States, in any contingency. It is the only country in the entire Mediterranean basin area that has consented to the installation of Voice of America transmitters on its territory.

■ There is no other country in the Middle East except Israel that can be considered to have a stable government or populace friendly to the United States. There is much danger that any military aid to Arab countries, and military equipment given or sold to them, will suffer the same fate as the untold billions of dollars and priceless military secrets that were lost to our enemies in the debacle of Iran. Is Saudi Arabia more stable? Egypt? Jordan? Iraq? Kuwait? Judge for yourself!

■ Only a fraction of the aid given stays in Israel. By far the largest share remains in the U.S., where it is spent with American defense contractors. Peter McPherson, administrator of the Agency for International Development, estimates that every billion dollars of aid to Israel creates 60,000 to 70,000 jobs in the United States.

■ Compared to the $1.8 billion yearly military aid to Israel, the U.S. contributes on the order of $130 billion(!) every year to the defense of Europe and about $30 billion to the defense of Japan, Korea and the Far East. 340,000 U.S. troops are stationed with NATO and 30,000 U.S. troops in the Far East. In contrast, not one single U.S. soldier needs to be stationed and put at risk in Israel. U.S. military analysts estimate that the U.S. would have to spend the equivalent of $150 billion a year in the Middle East to maintain a force equivalent to Israel's.

There are many other benefits that the U.S. military derives from Israel. Israel is the only country that has gained battlefield experience with U.S. weapons. This experience is immediately conveyed to the U.S. Enormous quantities of captured Soviet weapons and defense systems are turned over to the U.S. military for analysis. Israel, in the light of its experience, continually modifies U.S. weapons systems. For instance, Israeli scientists have made over 200 improvements in the F-15 alone. It would be more in line with reality if military aid to Israel were classified as "defense" rather than as "aid". President Reagan said it well: "The fall of Iran has increased Israel's value as perhaps the only remaining strategic asset in the region on which the United States can fully rely". American aid to Israel is a two-way street. Aid to Israel is America's greatest defense bargain.

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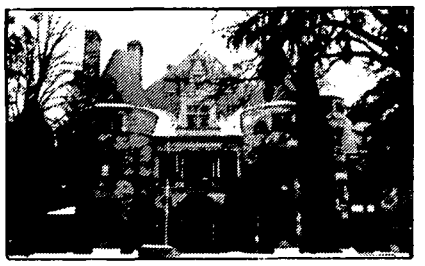

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Base coat/clear coat painting is a better way to paint cars. Instead of the old single layer of lacquer or enamel color coat, General Motors now uses two layers of paint on most of our models. The base layer contains the pigment or color, and the top layer is a clear coat of acrylic polymer to bring out the brilliance of the color and give a glossy, mirror-like finish.

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With single coat finishes, the color is exposed to the atmosphere, so sun, water, wind and dirt can cause deterioration. With base coat/clear coat paint, the color is not exposed to the atmosphere, so the desirable characteristics of the finish last longer.

Base coat/clear coat finishes require less maintenance, but they, like all paints, are susceptible to abrasives, which will scratch the finish or give it a hazy appearance, reducing both its gloss and imaging (mirror-like) qualities.

Wash any base coat/clear coat finish with gentle, non-abrasive cleaners, rinsing away all loose dirt with plenty of water before sponging on the soapy solution.

Rinse the cloth or sponge or change it frequently to avoid scratching the finish with dirt or grit. If you use a commercial tar or bug remover, read the instructions carefully, then try it out on an inconspicuous area first.

If you use a commercial car wash, look for one that uses a soft scrub system. A few car wash systems employ harsh brushes, which may scratch the clear coat finish.

Base coat/clear coat paint need not be polished as often as a lacquer or enamel to remove the grime and effects of weathering. When you do polish it (once or twice a year), use a mild cleaning wax, not an abrasive. Polish gently, by hand.

Avoid mechanical polishing or sanding of the surface.

Don't use a scrub brush on the paint or on the wheels, if they're aluminum mag wheels with clear coat paint on them.

You can help maintain the finish on your car by parking and driving wisely. Try not to park under trees, where bird droppings or sap, which contain compounds that can injure the finish, may fall onto your car. Try to park upwind from industrial areas. If you get cement dust or fly ash on your car from any fire or smokestack, rinse it off immediately.

When you drive, go easy on the gas pedal to keep stones from flying up and chipping the paint during quick starts. When traveling on dirt or gravel roads, put some extra distance between you and the car ahead to avoid running into stones thrown into the air by that car's tires.

If you get a scratch or chip in the finish, and it's a deep one, you should probably seek expert repair advice on how to keep it looking good and to avoid exposing bare metal to the elements. If the scratch is small, auto supply stores and GM dealers offer two-step touch-up paints to repair the underlying color coat and the clear coat finish.

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THE CONTINUING CRISIS

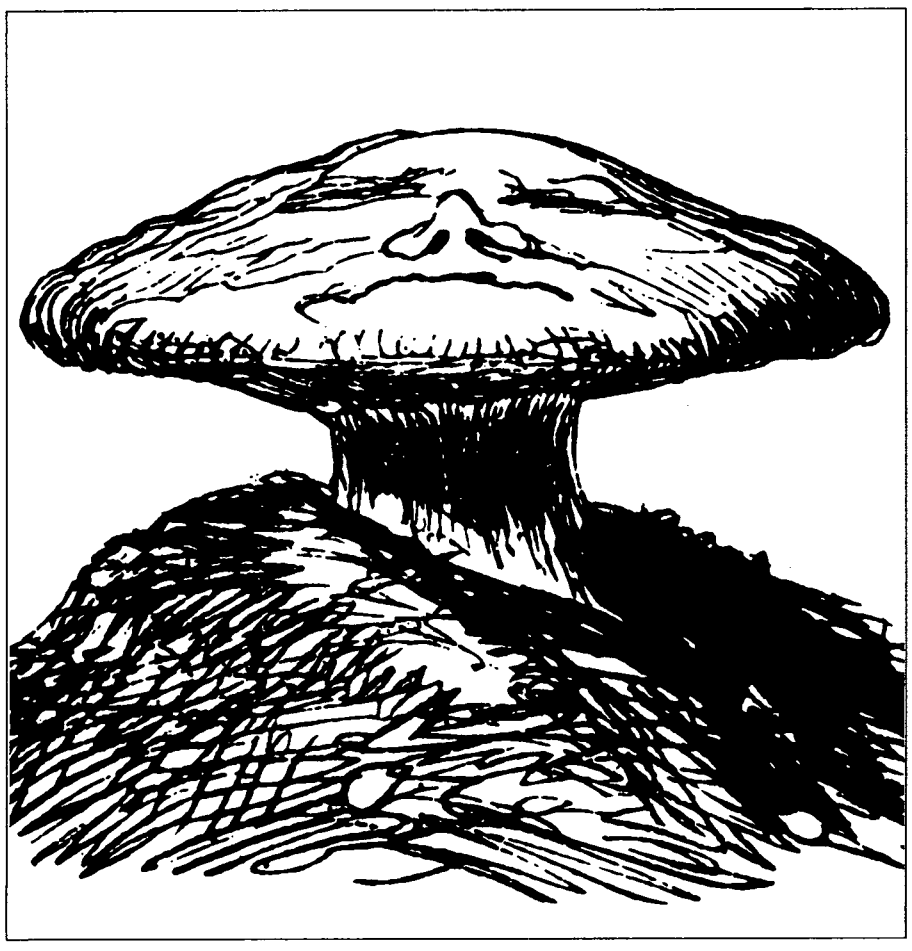
•March came in like a lamb (*Ovis aries*) and, rather surprisingly, exited like a lamb; though not for General Manuel Antonio Noriega, the Panamanian strongman and pharmaceutical dealer. In March the Reagan Administration did to his economy what Mr. Reagan's critics insist he has done to the American economy, that is to say, devastate it. First, the State Department announced that it had suspended payments to Panama. Then it froze Panamanian funds, immobilizing the economy. By month's end even the Rev. Jesse Jackson might have admitted that Panama was in worse shape than the United States—assuming he could find a suitable rhyme in which to express the idea. And as for the American economy for which the campaigning Democrats so movingly repine, the Commerce Department announced that the GNP enjoyed a real increase of 4.8 percent in the fourth quarter of 1987, following a 4.3 percent rise in the third quarter. The Labor Department announced a mere 0.2 percent increase in the February Consumer Price Index. And March was the sixty-fourth consecutive month of economic growth.

•A renewed spirit of détente is seeping out of the State Department, filling the ever-hopeful with helium and happiness. During the last bout with détente much of Southeast Asia lost its freedom, as well as Angola, Ethiopia, and Mozambique. This time the casualties could be Israel and South Africa, Nicaragua having been lost in March when the Capitol Hill Chamberlains cut off aid to the contras. A suggestion of Israel's perilous future was provided when Secretary of State George Shultz engauded his "peace process" with a plan to sit Israel down to confer about territories gained from the 1967 war with such devoted enemies as Syria, Jordan, China, and the USSR. The USSR not surprisingly is the point of origin for this singularly pernicious scheme, Moscow having in the 1970s no other way to insinuate itself into the area. Now in this new era of détente Moscow has Washington's help. The National Park Service has proposed landmark status for Whittaker Chambers's farm, in whose garden grew the pumpkin, in whose maw was placed the microfilms that hung the inveterate Alger.

•Mr. Arnold F. Willat, who developed the first permanent for women, died at the age of 102, bald. A Missouri Court of Appeals denied Mr. Thor Eric Davis's plea that he is exempt from applying for a driver's license owing to his religious convictions. Mr. Davis had argued that his beliefs entitled him to diplomatic immunity as an ambassador from "the Kingdom of God." One of the nation's richest collections of homosexual memorabilia has been donated to Cornell University by the eminent Mariposa Education and Research Foundation, which, however, has yet to offer researchers the requisite condoms and rubber gloves. In Commerce, California, an unidentified 31-year-old man who had conscientiously buckled his teddy bear into its automobile seat but then forgotten to buckle up himself died when he was thrown during a crash.

•Mr. Richard Croxton Adams, a descendant of Massachusetts's famed Adams family and the inventor of the paint roller, died at the age of 76. On March 8 Vice President George Bush wrapped up the Republican presidential nomination to the apparent astonishment of the wise doves of the Beltway; but the Democratic race remained a bouillabaisse of oddities, including Senator Albert Gore who, after cosmetic surgery changed him from a dove to a hawk, emerged from Super Tuesday as a plausible challenger to the party's two improbable front-runners, Governor Mary Lou Dukakis of Guam and the Rev. Jesse Jackson of Libya—both of whom have problems with the voters, the former because she is not widely known and the latter because he is. On March 26 the Rev. Jackson beat Governor Dukakis in the Michigan primaries making a Jackson-Dukakis ticket a distinct possibility. Earlier in the month the Socialist Workers Party chose Mr. James McWarren, 36, a civil rights activist, and Miss Kathy Mickells, 37, a West Virginia coal miner, as presidential and vice presidential candidates respectively, assuring that the party, which polled 25,000 votes in 1984, will have at least as much experience in foreign policy as the Democrats and possibly be no further left.

•Mr. Jacques Tiffeau, a leading proponent of the miniskirt who lost interest in fashion after hemlines fell in the 1970s, died in Paris. He was 59. Credibility continues to drain from Miss Tawana Brawley's complaint that she was sexually abused, rolled in dog excrement, given an uncouth hair cut, inscribed with racial slurs, and wrapped in a garbage bag in Wappingers Falls, New York by local nativists. The most recent blossoming of question marks came when the Rev. Al Sharpton, a self-appointed spokesman for the family who has been a self-appointed preacher since 14, charged that Miss Brawley's assailants were members of the Irish Republican Army. On March 16 Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North, Admiral John Poindexter, and two associates were indicted by a federal grand jury on charges related to the Iran-contra affair. And Soviet sharpshooters showed how to deal with rowdy musicians when they shot their way into a Soviet airliner that had been hijacked by a Dixieland Band, composed of the Ovechkin family of Irkutsk. There were no survivors.



•Mr. John Allegro, who gained renown for his brilliant deciphering of the Dead Sea Scrolls, died in London. He was 65, and in recent years had suffered derision in the scientific world for his theories that Western religion originated in the worship of mushrooms. In fact, he claimed that Jesus Christ's last words on the cross were not a lament but rather "a paen of praise to the god of the mushroom." In New York another star of the "Donahue" show and a lecturer at the Harvard Law School is in trouble. Miss Joyce Brown, the homeless woman who was institutionalized for mental treatment before being sprung by ACLU lawyers convinced of her sanity, was again spotted on the streets, begging and shouting obscenities of a kind that are certain to get her a second appearance at Harvard and on "Donahue."

•Mr. John Holmes, the pornographic film star, who in the 14,000 sexual conquests he bragged of must have encountered at least one rotten apple, died of AIDS. He was 43. In Newark, New Jersey, Mr. Arlan Seidon, the animal trainer who has been on the lam for nearly four years with two 3-ton pachyderms, has offered to turn himself in so that he might see his first-born grandson. His only stipulation is that the animals be well treated.

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Wisconsin Pharmacal Company's revolutionary female condom will soon undergo tests. The device is a soft polyurethane vaginal liner shaped like a diaphragm, and because its outer ring covers the female labia it prevents any direct contact between male and female genitalia. In fact sexual partners using the female condom are hardly even having sex, their act being more like riding a subway at rush hour on a cold winter night. Researchers have dubbed the device "the garbage bag." Finally, March may be remembered as the month that auspicated a new American rights movement, "wardrobe rights." In Boston a federal worker, Mr. Roger Arnold, lost his 15-month battle against the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms' requirement that he wear a tie. He is being dismissed. But in Tampa, Florida, Mr. Lee Grant has hired legal counsel to defend him against the charges of a former employer who claims that he wore garish sport coats while selling used cars at Darby Buick in Sarasota. The battle lines have been drawn! —*RET*

CORRESPONDENCE

This Coogler Shall Remain Homeless

I write as counsel to Deborah Mashibini to inquire when it is that she will receive her Coogler Award ("The Worst Books of the Year," *TAS*, March 1988). We are sure it will be at least as tasteful and useful as your writings.

—Robert Hayes
Coalition for the Homeless
New York, New York

Lawrence Walsh and Southern Air

In Charlotte Low's recent article "Lawrence Walsh's Holy War" (*TAS*, March 1988), she makes reference to potential conflicts of interest among lawyers on his staff. She makes no mention, however, of any potential conflicts of interest regarding Mr. Walsh himself.

Last spring, a colleague and I revealed a potential conflict of interest involving the special prosecutor. It received little attention in the national press and was generally downplayed by those who chose to follow up on the reports. Yet, further investigation revealed some very interesting questions regarding the Oklahoma City law firm where Mr. Walsh was "of counsel" and its relations with Southern Air Transport (SAT), the air cargo firm that handled the transfer of TOW missiles from Texas to the Middle East.

In late April 1987, freelance reporter Tony Kimery and I were able to report that the law firm, Crowe & Dunlevy of Oklahoma City, had handled the aircraft registration of three 707s purchased by SAT from Kuwaiti Airlines. Two of the planes were confirmed as those used in the missile transfer. When we interviewed him, Mr. Walsh denied any possible conflict of interest, explaining the aircraft registration performed by Crowe & Dunlevy was similar to handling a title search for purchase of a home. In effect, he said no true attorney-client relationship existed. Furthermore, he added, he had known nothing of the work performed for Southern Air Transport.

Several days after our interview, we were able to review additional records maintained at the Federal Aviation Administration documents center in Oklahoma City and discovered still more interesting information about the business relationship between Crowe & Dunlevy and SAT. It appears the relationship was more than a passing "title search." First, the law firm attempted to help speed the actual registration and purchase of the 707s from Kuwaiti Airlines. Telex copies indicate that in late 1985 the law firm encouraged the Federal Aviation Administration to hasten the process.

But the most serious questions are raised by documents that concern a lease agreement between Southern Air Transport and a firm called Safair Freighters. Southern Air Transport leased a handful of Lockheed L-100s from Safair, planes reportedly used by SAT in the re-supply effort of the contras in Nicaragua. Who reviewed the lease agreement for Southern Air? Crowe & Dunlevy. The FAA records show that SAT asked Crowe & Dunlevy to review the lease agreement and that the firm responded with an approval of the agreement.

Mr. Walsh might not have known of the business relationship that existed between the law firm and Southern Air Transport. But it presents us nonetheless with some rather interesting questions. How has his probe dealt with Southern Air Transport? Did his law firm unknowingly play a role in the transfer of missiles? The telex copies on file with the FAA show dates that might be critical in establishing how use of the planes came about. . . .

None of this is meant to impugn Mr. Walsh's integrity or character. And it does not mean he knew of any business relationship between Crowe & Dunlevy and those involved in the missile transactions. But I believe it certainly gives one pause to wonder.

—Jerry Bohnen
News Director, KTOK Radio
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Charlotte Low replies:

Mr. Bohnen's letter prompted me to call several legal ethicists at major law schools to see what their answers might be to the questions he raises. The consensus seems to be that it is sophistic to argue that work performed by a law firm is not "legal work" just because it is simple and routine. Much legal work, from a no-asset divorce to evicting a tenant for nonpayment of rent, is of such a routine nature that litigants often do it themselves to save the attorney fees. But should they hire a lawyer to do a job, they certainly have a right to assume that they have set up an attorney-client relationship with that lawyer. They have a right to expect that their communications will remain confidential and that the lawyer will not suddenly switch sides.

As the American Bar Association's Model Rules of Professional Conduct say, "Loyalty is an essential element in the lawyer's relationship to a client." With respect to former clients, the rules say that a lawyer cannot represent anyone with a "materially adverse interest" to the former client in the same or a substantially related matter without the former client's consent and cannot "use information relating to the representation to the disadvantage of the former client." Law firms are subject to the same constraints as individual lawyers, and lawyers who are "of counsel" (on a part-time consulting basis) to a firm, as Lawrence Walsh was to Crowe & Dunlevy, are treated the same in the ethics rules as full-time members of the firm.

It is likely that Southern Air Transport hired Crowe & Dunlevy—at the high hourly rates a well-regarded firm like Crowe & Dunlevy undoubtedly commands—to handle the registration of its 707s because Southern Air's management thought Crowe & Dunlevy had the expertise to do the job quickly and efficiently. I am informed that airplane registration is a profitable side business for many Oklahoma City law firms, because the Federal Aviation Administration maintains its nationwide aircraft registration records in that city. As for sending telexes to the FAA asking the agency to hurry along the process, well, that's advocacy, which is what lawyers do for a living.

Finally, no one would seriously argue that reviewing a lease agreement is not legal work. It is likely, though, that neither Lawrence Walsh nor Richard C. Ford, the Crowe & Dunlevy partner who runs the Oklahoma City branch of the independent counsel's office for the Iran-contra investigation, personally performed any of this work, which seems from Mr. Bohnen's description to be of the type normally done by junior associates or even paralegals.

The next question is: What are the ethical obligations to his firm's former clients of a lawyer who forsakes private practice to carry on a government investigation such as a special prosecution that arguably touches on the very activities for which the client hired the firm to do legal work? It is highly likely that Walsh's staff has looked into Southern Air's activities, both on the Mideast missile shipment end and the contra re-supply end. Is there a conflict of interest that should disqualify the lawyer for the government work? The answer of most ethicists and the ABA model rules would ordinarily be, no problem, if we can assume the special prosecutor did not handle the former client's work personally and has left the firm. "The standards are designed to encourage people . . . to contribute their time to government work," says Stephen Gillers, professor of legal ethics at New York University.

Walsh and Ford might be home free on this question were it not for the anomaly that Ford (unlike Walsh) has never completely severed his ties with Crowe & Dunlevy. He continues as a partner with the firm and is volunteering his time with Walsh from Oklahoma City. By imputation, then, it can be said that the entire independent counsel's office retains a connection with Crowe & Dunlevy. This is a situation so unusual that it does not come up for specific discussion in the ABA model rules or their copious commentary, but one well-regarded ethicist says, "There could be some problems." After all, the model rules bind lawyers and law firms equally in forbidding them to take adverse interests to former clients or use protected information.

Questioned about possible conflict of interest, Ford's response is a flat denial that any problem exists. "This is old news," he says. "They were unrelated matters that were long ago and closed." Queries relayed to Walsh went unanswered. But it is clear that Ford and, by implication, Walsh have access to Crowe & Dunlevy's closed Southern Air Transport files. The bulk of the serious counts in the 101-page indictment Walsh filed against the Iran-Contra Four on March 16 revolves around activities in which Southern Air was intimately involved. According to court records, Southern Air has said that it was asked to participate in the Iran weapons sale by Secord, and in the contra re-supply by North.

Pondering Gilder in Peshawar

Belated congratulations on your twentieth anniversary [*TAS*, December 1987], as news travels slowly to the Khyber Pass. I enjoy *TAS* as much now as I did when you published it as *The Alternative* years ago.

Yet a recent trend, on its pages and elsewhere, is disconcerting and typified by a remark by Mr. George Gilder (which I reconstructed from memory, having lent my copy to some *mujahedeen*). Arguing [in his article, "The Message of the Microcosm"] that technology has rendered geography meaningless, he notes that all the important parts of Cuba are now found in Miami; true if by important he means nice. However, the geographic and political Cuba is as highly troublesome as heavily armed, and so are their Soviet colleagues in my neighborhood.

I can't help but wonder if many of us, wowed by technology and tangled in the worldwide ganglion of silicon electronics that Mr. Gilder describes, haven't taken a Whiggish turn and landed in what could be called illogical positivism. Conflicts are not always won on Gross National Products with cellular phones. One suspects that plenty of high-tech Athenians sneered at backward Sparta as bereft of art, culture, and invention, and only interested in armies. Yet Spartan armies won.

Gilder is always good reading, and he should keep faith in American ingenuity and keep blasting at backward economists, but lest he go overboard he should perhaps tear himself away from the Radio Shack catalogue and spend a week in Russell Kirk's library.

—Stephen J. Masty, Editor
Humanitarian News Service
Peshawar, Pakistan

George Gilder replies:

Masty's letter is trenchant and powerful and I salute him for his current work on the frontiers. Nonetheless, his resistance to the message from the microcosm conceals the canker of a conservative death wish. Upheld by leading conservative philosophers with an aristocratic bent and disdain for "men in

(continued on page 47)

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EDITORIALS

BUSH RESURRECTED

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

Where were you when first notified of the political death of George Herbert Walker Bush? Well, those of us who harbor an intense interest in the great game of politics have been notified of the Vice President's moribund condition off and on for some years, but think of where you were during the most recent reports.

In early February I received the sepulchral news at Luis Muñoz Marin International Airport in San Juan where I chanced upon a Democratic political adviser of legendary wit and astuteness. Geopolitical curiosity had taken me to the Caribbean for a week of reconnoitering during which I was out of touch with presidential campaigning. Before my departure, however, Bush was heading towards the Iowa caucuses and the New Hampshire primary with a vast sum of money and a huge and efficient campaign staff. Nationally he was the front-runner by a volupt margin. Yet three nights before my illuminating encounter in San Juan Bush did poorly in the Iowa caucuses, and now he seemed to be slipping in New Hampshire.

"He's dead," reported this distinguished pundit. Charity enjoins me from relating his identity. He is a gentleman and he was only reiterating what all the Washington insiders were pronouncing. He went on to inform me that a shocking report of a telephone call from the Vice President to Panama's General Manuel Antonio Noriega just before our invasion of Grenada had sealed Bush's fate—all Washington was in full throat against him. Enlightened Washington's line was: "Bush will be out of it after New Hampshire."

How was it possible that in a matter of a week 108,477 Iowa Republicans in caucus assembled could bring Bush to ruin? Think of all the states Bush led, particularly those Southern states. Think of his superb staff, the obvious support of the Administration, that $20 million in his campaign treasury. My San Juan confidant waved all this away, offering to bet me legal tender that Bush was through.

Adapted from RET's weekly Washington Post *column syndicated by King Features.*

The media knew no better. On the CBS Evening News an adamantine Dan Rather spoke of Bush's "humiliation," in Iowa, which left him "an embarrassing and fading third." Mary McGrory spoke of Bush's "crucifixion." *Newsweek* spoke of Bush "fighting for his very survival" after having been "eclipsed by Sen. Bob Dole and the suddenly credible Pat Robertson." Well, "eclipsed" for how long and "credible" to whom? My personal favorite among all the pundits' death notices was that of Michael Kramer, chief political correspondent of *U.S. News & World Report* who from chill New Hampshire, perhaps mere hours before Bush's victory, reported that the Vice President "now seems headed for a *college* presidency—or to the chairmanship of the Purolator Corp., a job that has been more or less kept open for Bush in the event of his (involuntary) retirement from politics." (Emphasis added.)

So now Bush has swept far ahead of all comers. No one will stop him in his quest of the Republican nomination, and the fractious Democratic party faces its most chaotic convention in decades. The economy is strong. Fears of a recession are evaporating. Bush has demonstrated an ability not only to survive but also to debate effectively against competent opponents, almost any of whom might make a race of it against any present Democratic contender. Yet the death notices will not end. Take my word for it.

The insiders now murmur that Bush cannot win in the fall, and that the Democrats much prefer him over Senator Dole as their opponent. The Democrats in 1980 had a favorite Republican opponent too; his name was Ronald Reagan. Reagan also fared badly in the Iowa caucuses back then; and that authoritative political pundit, Richard Reeves, reported that President Carter had just "lost his favorite Republican opponent." "The former California governor was a set-up for Mr. Carter," Reeves declared. "The President's polls showed him taking everything from Reagan but conservative Republicans."

It is George Bush's luck to be constantly underestimated by the pundits. That is why they will continue to count him out. One other pol has suffered the same low esteem from the insiders, the aforementioned Ronald Reagan. □

A CONFERENCE FOR CHAOS

In the art and practice of diplomacy there is one sure way to bring matters to confusion and to mischief. Convene a conference, inviting the multitudes. Old hands in our State Department must know this. When, after World War I, the wily French Foreign Minister Aristide Briand hoped to drag America into the affairs of perfidious Europe, he exploited American innocence by asking that we sign a treaty with France outlawing war. In those days our Secretary of State was even wilier than the suave French. Recognizing a trap that would make us the virtual defender of French security, Secretary of State Frank Kellogg said: Sure, and bring all peace-loving nations into the treaty. The consequence was chaos, and the treaty for "the outlawry of war" never bound anyone to do anything other than snicker.

The Reagan Administration's projected peace conference for the Middle East promises chaos too, but it will not keep us free of foreign entanglements as did old Mr. Kellogg's diplomacy. It will drag us into an area where American interests are already being secured by others, mainly the Israelis. Moreover, it will drag us there under the most perilous circumstances, which is to say that after our imbecilic diplomacy has weakened Israel sufficiently we shall have to commit our forces to defend our interests.

Right now, in a turbulent area fraught with religious and ethnic discord of, shall we say, arabesque complexity, Israel defends Western interests. Unlike other Middle Eastern govern-

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ments, it is pro-Western across its political spectrum. Whoever comes to power will be on our side. No other Middle Eastern government is so reliable or stable. The Middle East itself is a crossroads linking three continents, a thoroughfare for oil shipments to the West. For centuries this crossroads has been precarious, but Israel contributes to what security there is. Its strength keeps the moderate regimes of Jordan and Saudi Arabia free from such brutal regimes as Syria and Iraq. If Israel were gone tomorrow, Middle Eastern violence would continue. As the Iraq-Iran war and the violence in Lebanon demonstrate, the Middle East is not tranquil Scandinavia. It is a cauldron of hatreds where anti-Western radicals will remain a threat for years to come.

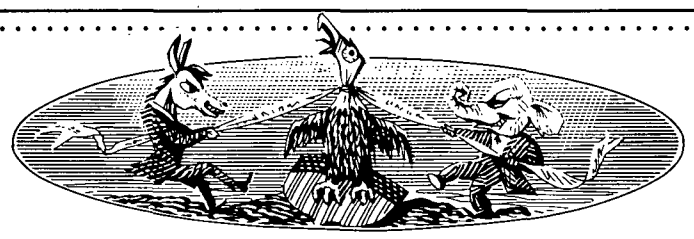
Now Israel is our stable friend. It shares intelligence with us. It cooperates with our Navy and Air Force. It has knocked out a nuclear reactor whose eventual output of nuclear weaponry might have led to World War III. Israel weighs forever against radical Arab influence but also Soviet influence. Without Israel's military presence the Soviets' Black Sea fleet and Indian Ocean fleet could in time of conflict combine rapidly through a vulnerable Suez Canal.

Yet now our government wants to bring together a conference with some of the most violent regimes on earth and return Israel to its 1967 borders, separating it from territories it took in self-defense during the 1967 war, a war that nearly cost Israel its life. Our diplomats hope Israel will trust us to guarantee its protection as did South Vietnam, the Shah's Iran, and now the contras. Let's face it, we have become unreliable friends. Nevertheless we ask Israel to trust us as we convene a conference between Israel and nations that refuse to recognize its nationhood and that in most cases are sworn to destroy it.

If Israel gives up the West Bank those who now throw stones will be able to throw even more lethal missiles into Israel's main cities, its military camps, its mobilization centers. Haifa, Jerusalem, and Tel Aviv would be within rifle or shell range of furious revanchists sworn to eliminate the Jewish state.

Bereft of the security afforded by the West bank, Israel will be sorely weakened. Some analysts believe invasion from radical Arab armies will be inevitable, and Israel will be either destroyed or rendered incapable of its present strategic support of Western interests. Then where will the United States be? In the same sorry state that it is now finding itself after jettisoning the contras, and that is to say our arms will be needed where others once did our work. Certainly the Palestinians have a right to their own state. I say we give them Jordan. It was originally foreseen as their home in 1922 and should be again. □

CAPITOL IDEAS



GORE'S GAMBIT

by Tom Bethell

In chess, the Queen is said to be pinned when it is attacked by an opposing piece but cannot move because doing so would expose the King to check. An analogous situation now exists in the presidential campaign. Reagan is the King, and the Democratic nominee, say Governor Michael Dukakis or Senator Albert Gore, could make the devastating move that would "pin" the Queen, Vice President George Bush. Jesse Jackson's Michigan win now admittedly makes him the Democratic front-runner, and the party may not be able to deny him the nomination. But if it is a Dukakis-Gore ticket, the Gore Gambit (as I shall call it) is a real threat to Bush. I hereby alert the Bush campaign to the Vice President's dangerous position right now on the political chessboard.

The danger to Bush stems from President Reagan's strange desire to reduce the U.S. nuclear arsenal by 50 percent —accompanied by an unenforceable Soviet promise to do likewise. Bush supports this risky position, and in doing so he is "pinned." If Bush moves away from Reagan on arms reduction, then he abandons the strategy of loyalty to the King that has stood him in good stead throughout the Iranian Contradictions. If he does not move away, then he is exposed to the Gore Gambit (which Dukakis might also set in motion).

The Administration's arms control team in Geneva right now has "on the table" a proposal to reduce by 50 percent our strategic nuclear arsenal. Think of it: the number of our nuclear missile submarines could conceivably be reduced from 32 to 16. The number of our B-1 bombers, of our MX and Minuteman intercontinental ballistic missiles could be reduced by a similar percentage. This proposal is more radical than anything that even this year's left-leaning Democratic candidates have offered the electorate. Perhaps more to the point, because the Reagan offer is a live, concrete proposal that has been advanced in the real policy arena, the Republicans are potentially far more exposed by it than the Democrats are by any vague campaign promises they may have made.

It is therefore possible that Gore or Dukakis could make a tactical move to the right, saying as they did so something like this:

"I am for arms control negotiations 100 percent. But I am also for arms control proposals that are *safe* and *equitable*. I applaud President Reagan's historic foreign policy compromises, his well-intentioned efforts to reduce tension between the superpowers, and to restore detente. Suspicion between our two countries has gone on for long enough. If elected, I too will commit myself to working closely with the General Secretary, Mikhail Gorbachev. But the Reagan-Bush 50-percent arms-reduction proposal goes too far and has been negotiated too hastily. The safety of the United States must not be sacrificed on the altar of political expediency, nor can Mr. Reagan's place in the history books be placed above the legitimate concerns of the American people. Therefore, I hereby announce my opposition to the Republican disarmament proposal. I pledge to you that if elected, and unlike George Bush, I will think twice before cutting up half of our nuclear submarines. For if we take such an irrevocable step, what guarantees do we have that the Soviets will follow suit? Can we simply accept their word that they will, as the Vice President seems to believe. I do not believe that we can be so trusting . . ."

I have tried this out on a dozen people and they all respond in the same fashion: "Don't worry, it'll never happen. The Democrats have moved so far to the left that they could not even countenance such a move." But can we really be so sure? The Soviets themselves would no doubt "accept" such a move, provided they believed it to be cynical and tactical in nature: helpful to a Democratic recapture of the White House but not necessarily injurious to future arms control and other deals-with-Democrats once in power. Since, as far as I can see, the whole goal of arms control, from the U.S. perspective, is to placate the Soviets, such a move would meet with low-keyed acceptance from the Hive. Some bees would buzz. Alex Cockburn would complain, for the sake of appearances, about there not being a dime's worth of difference between the parties. It's the *Republicans* who would be in a state of uproar.

When I mentioned the possibility of a Gore Gambit to Kenneth Adelman, the former director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, now with the Institute for Contemporary Studies, he said he did not believe the Democrats would make such a move because basically Democrats believe the polling data purporting to show that the American people favor arms control. Possibly. But some among the Democratic advisers must realize that arms control polling figures are among the murkiest and most unreliable in the business and that most Americans really don't have the slightest idea about the subject. In a 1986 poll, for example, half the respondents could not say which two countries were involved in SALT or START talks. Pro-arms control polls merely record the (non-con-

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troversial) public approval of improved relations between the U.S. and the Soviet Union.

Polls were actually published last fall showing supposed popular support for the INF treaty before the U.S. and the Soviet negotiators in Geneva had even finished negotiating it and before our own arms control experts had so much as seen a photograph of the missile that the Soviets were supposedly discarding. To this day, some armaments experts wonder if this missile (SS-20) really exists. The general ignorance about arms control was well illustrated this winter when Pat Robertson pointed out that George Bush himself seemed unaware that the nuclear warheads are to be excluded from the INF treaty. (Thus the treaty could not really be said to reduce either side's *nuclear* arsenal.)

Thus if I were advising Dukakis or Gore, I would not take such arms control polls very seriously. As it is, Democrats feel much more free than Republicans to move where they will in the policy arena. They recognize that the pollsters are basically "theirs" to begin with, and that "public opinion," far from being fixed in concrete, is the Democrats' to manipulate. A few speeches about treaty-euphoria in the White House and the overlooked security of the American people and "public opinion" would turn overnight. So it does seem to me quite possible that either Dukakis or Gore might make a tactical right turn on arms control. And at that point the Republicans would be in serious trouble. Likewise, incidentally, the Democrats could also attack the Republicans for the shameful State Department attempt to sell out (apparently behind Reagan's back) the freedom fighters in Afghanistan.

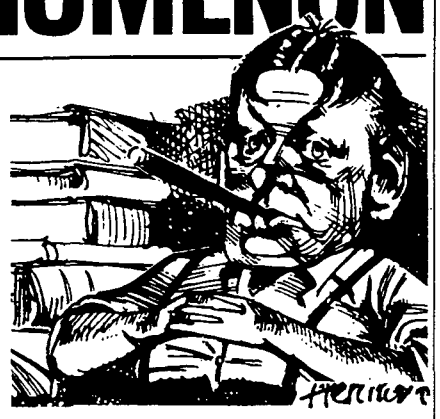
The country is in any event not in a healthy political condition if one major party is relying on the other major party not to make the obvious political move. Notice that in earlier presidential elections the Democrats did make the obvious moves. Since FDR the Democrats have only twice recaptured the White House from Republican incumbents—in 1960 and 1976. Both times they moved to the Republicans' right. John F. Kennedy made much of an alleged missile gap; and (lest we forget), Jimmy Carter effectively criticized Gerald Ford's comment that Poland was not under Soviet domination. If Marty Peretz of the *New Republic* is not right now urging his Harvard pupil to execute the Gore Gambit, I would be surprised.

The latest word (as of late March) is that the strategic arms treaty will not be ready for Reagan's and Gorbachev's signatures at the time of Reagan's visit to Moscow in late May. Notice, however, that even if there is no formal treaty the foregoing analysis still applies. It is unlikely that Gorbachev will permit Reagan to come to Moscow and get away without signing *something*, and what the President will be expected to sign (Adelman believes) is a "framework agreement" committing the U.S.—and the loyal "Queen" Bush—to a 50-percent arms reduction *in principle* (with the details to be worked out later, by the future occupant of the Oval Office). Such an agreement would be dangerous for the U.S. because it would be binding on us in a way that it would not be on the Soviets. And it is at that point, after such a Moscow "framework agreement," not before, that the Democrats might decide to have a little fun with the Republicans by moving their Bishop onto that diagonal line where the Republican King and Queen so unguardedly stand. (The Gore Gambit is for the fall, not the primaries.)

In all of these negotiations, the U.S. does not seem to have given sufficient weight to the possibility that the Soviets can simply accept the U.S. proposal *in toto*, without requesting a single change. The U.S. negotiating strategy, both in START and INF, seems to have been to encumber the U.S. proposal

THE MENCKEN PHENOMENON

"I believe in only one thing and that thing is human liberty...I am against any man and any organization which seeks to limit or deny that freedom."



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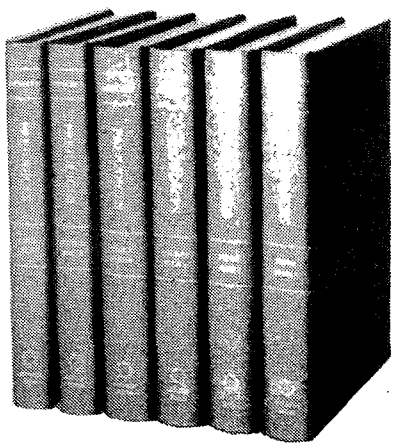

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with putatively "unacceptable" provisions. Nonetheless, the Soviets in INF (after much grumbling and asking for more U.S. concessions) in the end did accept the terms. And the Soviets could still do the same with the START proposal, because of course they now understand the amazing fact that they are not obliged to comply with anything they sign. The U.S. side merely notes the Soviet violations, politely complains on Capitol Hill, and then comes back with a brand new arms control proposal. For their part the Soviets issue blanket denials that they have violated anything, and the U.S. media always take their side by reporting, very skeptically and on an inside page, "alleged" Soviet violations.

Therefore, in the present irresolute moment in Washington, there are no real grounds for hoping that Soviet recalcitrance will prevent "the arms control process" from sliding all the way down the slippery slope toward treaty signing ceremonies with brass band accompaniment. Once the U.S. has submitted a proposal, I repeat, the Soviets can accept it unchanged (after much stage-managed hemming and hawing) because they know that its arms-reducing provisions will be dutifully enforced by us, on us, whereas the Soviets will be obliged only to issue loud, indignant denials that they are not in compliance. It seems clear, incidentally, that President Reagan has not understood this point. He keeps saying *his* treaties are "verifiable," when that is not the problem. The U.S. has indeed "verified" that the Soviets have failed to comply with all arms control treaties. The problem is that we keep coming back for more.

In short, the current danger is not that there is no mechanism of verification, but that there is no penalty for non-compliance. The Soviets clearly do understand this. Does George Bush?

Adelman said he thought that the Soviets would not be willing to accept the U.S. START proposal as is because they want it to include a ban on all sea-launched cruise missles. The Soviets already succeeded, in what is by far the worst feature of the INF treaty, in getting us to agree to a ban on ground-launched cruise missiles, both conventional and nuclear. We have thereby forsworn use of our technological lead—the true goal of arms control from the Soviet point of view. Cruise missiles are now so accurate that they no longer have to be nuclear. High explosives will suffice for a direct hit on the Kremlin, which is why the Soviets have been so eager to ban the cruise. To date the Republican arms control team has been most obliging, thereby preserving intact U.S. dependence on the very nukes that Reagan says he wants to abolish.

Therefore, Adelman has a point: the Soviets would certainly like to seize the START opportunity to tie U.S. hands still further on the use of cruises—adding a ban on the sea-launched version. But if we don't give them this (and of course Paul Nitze might, but assume that he will not) then the Soviets are still free to "take" everything else that we are offering them in START—the entire 50-percent reduction already mentioned. Half a loaf may not be as good as a whole loaf, but it is better than none.

On one point I do agree with Adelman. "By falling in love with Gorbachev, Reagan has given up a big Republican issue," he said. Then, "to show you're tough," he added, "you have to run against the Reds in Central America. But the people aren't with you on that." How can you both fraternize with Gorbachev and warn plausibly of a Communist threat in Central America? For there is no plausible threat without Soviet support. And if that support is a reality, why are we fraternizing with the Soviets?

In all of this there is a great opportunity for the Democrats, and it will be interesting to see if they take it. □

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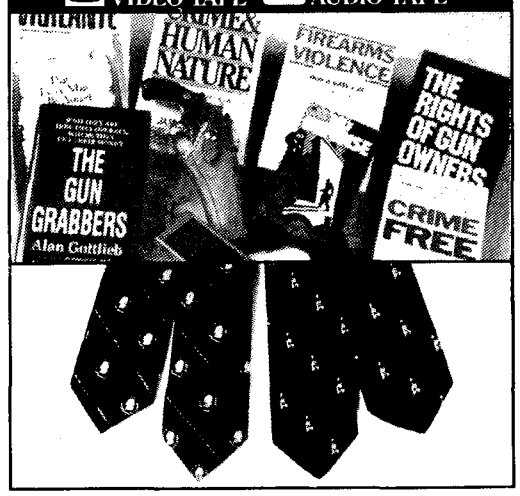

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Fred Barnes

WHY CAN'T CONSERVATIVES GOVERN?

For one thing, they seem to forget that Americans want big government.

At the final session of the Conservative Political Action Conference in Washington in February, Donald Devine proposed an extraordinarily ambitious agenda for conservatives in the post-Reagan era. The goal is constitutional amendments, said Devine, who ran the Office of Personnel Management in President Reagan's first term, then served as an adviser to Senator Bob Dole until Bill Brock, Dole's presidential campaign manager, fired him. Among the amendments advocated by Devine were ones mandating a balanced federal budget, giving the President a line item veto, and making education a local, not a federal, function. These are "difficult to achieve," he conceded, "but it's a fight worth fighting."

This is nuts. True, I'd love to see Devine succeed, but he hasn't a prayer. Popular amendments, such as the egregious Equal Rights Amendment and the silly amendment decriminalizing school prayer, have failed in recent years. If they can't gain approval (and the school prayer amendment hasn't even gotten over the first hurdle, Congress), how in the world are Devine's less popular amendments going to? Answer: they aren't. The Devine agenda is a lost cause, which is probably enough to make it irresistible to conservatives. They should know better. If conservatives would learn the lessons of the Reagan presidency, they'd come up with a realistic, realizable agenda.

My rule of thumb is that any conservative goal that wasn't achieved by Reagan isn't achievable, at least not this century. Reagan, after all, is as conservative a President as we're going to get. He may not have satisfied David Stockman or Howard Phillips, but I think he took the country as far in a conservative direction as it is willing to go. Liberals certainly think he did a lot, and they're right for once. But he also frequently came up short. He tried hard, for instance, to kill the utterly wasteful Urban Development Action Grant program, and failed. Now, conservatives should fashion a domestic agenda that takes such failures into account. I have four pieces of advice.

First, forget the libertarian ideal of, in Stockman's phrase, "minimalist government." The American people don't want sharply reduced government. I'm sorry to have to admit it, but they like big government. Worse, they like some of the worst programs—the Small Business Administration, the subsidy for Amtrak, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's funding of PBS and National Public Radio. Still, there's good news from the Reagan experience. Practically nobody wants *bigger* government. Folks are comfortable with just the size of government we've got now. This is a major achievement in itself. Eight years ago, the chief debate in the Democratic party was over national health insurance. Teddy Kennedy said we ought to have it immediately. President Jimmy Carter said it should be implemented gradually. Today it isn't advocated by any presidential candidate except Jesse Jackson, and he claims that universal health care would actually save money. That's a sign of the times for you.

Snuffing out the libertarian impulse won't be easy. It's deeply ingrained in the conservative mindset. When two or three conservatives get together, the subject of eliminating a government program is bound to come up. Conservatives aren't alone in the fight to trim government. Neoliberals agree with them. Economics columnist Robert Samuelson, for example, is leading the charge against the Amtrak subsidy. He also called for an end to farm payments, elimination of SBA and federal funding for local mass transit, and cuts in Social Security, Medicare, and federal retirement programs. Samuelson was bold enough to declare, "A $3.5 million grant to the MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour does not serve an important national priority." I found his column downright thrilling. But later I sobered up and realized it was all a pipe dream. These programs aren't going to be wiped out or drastically cut, neolib protests notwithstanding. And conservatives shouldn't waste their energy on trying to achieve the impossible.

Second, learn to like government work and to get along with bureaucrats. This won't be achieved overnight. It wasn't achieved in the nearly eight years of the Reagan Administration—far from it. For conservatives, what should have been an alarming article appeared in the *New York Times Magazine* last February under the title, "Reagan's Disappearing Bureaucrats." It told of the flight of young conservatives from the Administration. "Few are interested in government service as a career," wrote Phillip Longman. Rather, conservatives have "disdain . . . toward careers in government." Actually, their disdain isn't all-encompassing. Some jobs they like. Conservatives don't mind working in the White House, CIA, Justice Department, FBI, Pentagon, State Department, Treasury Department, Federal Reserve, or even a few of the regulatory agencies. The agencies that carry out social policy are the ones conservatives detest, and thus normally avoid.

Well, somebody's going to run them. If conservatives don't, liberals will, and they'll love every minute of it. Liberals regard government work as an end in itself. It's not just a stepping stone to a big job at Procter & Gamble. Conservatives have fallen for the myth that the permanent bureaucracy seizes control of conservative appointees and turns them into feckless pragmatists. Sometimes this happens, but it's not automatic. Smart, tough conservatives have discovered that the bureaucracy is tractable. If your ideas are sound, your orders clear, and you are willing to be flexible in the short run to accomplish things over the long haul, the bureaucracy will knuckle under. Bureaucrats may even become enthusiastic about conservative programs, which is the best of all worlds. If you don't believe

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me, ask Education Secretary William Bennett or Assistant Secretary of State Elliott Abrams. They haven't been dominated by bureaucrats, but instead have exploited the career types for conservative purposes.

Third, be programmatic. Except in foreign and defense policy, conservatives seem to believe that acts of omission are preferable to acts of commission. That's bad politics. In 1976, President Gerald Ford discovered as much when he madly sought examples of activist government to brag about. But his strength was abstaining from federal intervention, which didn't help him in the presidential election. When Irving Kristol suggests that conservatives find domestic programs of their own, he's on to something. At Education, Bennett has already moved in this direction and created a new set of conservative issues. Why aren't students reading the classics? Why are some ghetto schools able to educate kids so effectively and some aren't? How come colleges don't teach the fundamentals of Western civilization anymore? These are conservative questions, and they've now overshadowed the old liberal question of how much money are you spending on education.

Conservatives need to pick out programs that work and champion them. Head Start, which prepares poor kids for elementary school, is one. Its enrollment has risen in the Reagan years, but still it reaches only 425,000 kids. Why not expand it to cover every poor child in the country? Head Start could be one part of a broader conservative anti-poverty program. Such a program has to include more than tax breaks. British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher has shown the way here. She's sold public housing to poor tenants at bargain basement prices. House Republicans have pursued the same thing, and they nearly succeeded. What would help the poor as much as anything is an effective anti-drug program. Rev up the Coast Guard, use the military, hire more border guards. Make interdiction of drug traffic a top priority, not merely a lip-service issue. A raid by the Delta Force on Medellin, Colombia, would certainly show seriousness of purpose.

Conservatives should be hunting for problems to solve. That's what liberals are doing. For them, the new crying need is more day care. In fact, it is a need, but the answer isn't a U.S. Department of Day Care. A better, and politically more appealing, proposal is a universal tax credit for day care. That means the rich and middle class could claim it, and parental choice would be preserved. You'd get the credit no matter where you stashed your kids: at home, with a nanny, at a church, at a for-profit day-care center, and so on.

Transportation is another ripe area, highways in particular. As good as the interstate system is, it needs to be expanded to keep up with the number of cars. There's no reason conservatives shouldn't take the lead on this issue. And we need more airports. Have you flown into Atlanta or Boston lately? Their airports are dangerously overcrowded. The problem with air travel in this country isn't the airlines. Deregulation has left them more efficient and able to fly millions more people at reasonable fares. The problem is clogged airports. Maybe local authorities can be persuaded to build more airports. Conservatives should do the persuading.

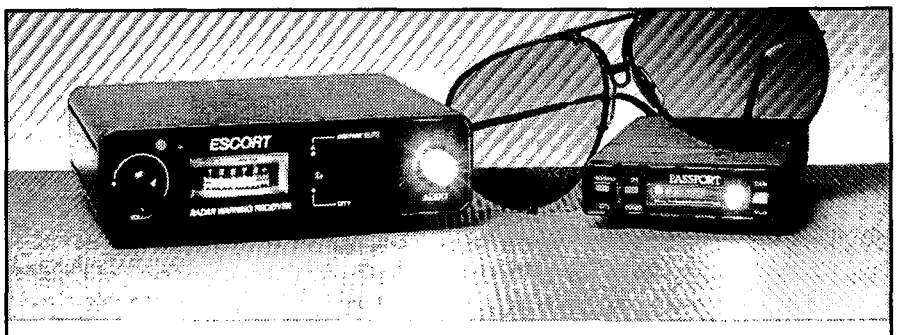
The Devine agenda is a lost cause, which is probably enough to make it irresistible to conservatives.

Four, spend. Conservatives are cheap. It's one of the tenets of the faith. But people like big-spending programs so long as they are for an indisputably good cause. It's when they think money is being wasted or used to no good end that people get upset. I think conservatives ought to give them two new spending programs to cheer about. In truth, one is old: the space program. Here's a program that is crying out for conservative leadership. We've fallen badly behind the Soviets in space, which is a national embarrassment as well as a threat to our national security. Conservatives should be up in arms. The best Reagan has done is keep alive the space shuttle and the space station, but a lot more could be done. Set a firm goal perhaps, and keep talking it up. Goals can be gimmicky, like President John Kennedy's vow to put an American on the moon, but they capture the public's imagination. Why not propose that spending at NASA be doubled for the next ten years to overtake the Soviets in every phase of space exploration and travel? This would be enormously worthwhile on both scientific and military grounds.

More expensive yet is the only welfare program that stands a chance of working. It's the one proposed in the Republican presidential race by Pete du Pont and originally concocted by Mickey Kaus, now a writer for *Newsweek*. Kaus's blazing insight was that "only work works." A lot of conservatives knew this, but hadn't articulated it so succinctly. The idea is that the underclass will find its way out of poverty and despair through regular paychecks. Poor people need an incentive: if they don't work, they get no money. No longer would the federal government subsidize sloth. Once the poor start working, many of them will want to get better jobs or start businesses of their own. And upward mobility from the lowest economic rung, stymied by the welfare system for five decades now, will return.

Unfortunately, there's a problem, and that's where big spending by the federal government comes in. Jobs for all the poor aren't available, and even if they were, many of the poor are unqualified for them. The government must step in and say, If you can't find a private job, we'll put you to work at slightly less than the minimum wage. The prod, of course, is that they wouldn't get paid a dime if they didn't accept a job somewhere. Even mothers with children three years and older would be required to work, as I envision the program at any rate. That would entail another big cost, money for day care for their children. For the poor, the tax credit would have to be refundable. In effect it would be a grant, and it would cost plenty.

Sure, a big bureaucracy would be required. Sure, there would be some corruption. Sure, Washington would play a bigger role in American life than before. But the result—people working and improving their lives—would be worth it. And paying for the program might have an interesting byproduct. William Kristol, Bennett's chief of staff at Education, says conservatives might be able to eliminate programs they hate by insisting the money is needed for a higher purpose. The argument would be that UDAG, SBA, Amtrak, and CPB must go so we can save the underclass. Might work. □



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Peter Skerry

ON EDGE: BLACKS AND MEXICANS IN LOS ANGELES

After fifteen years with Tom Bradley as mayor, neither group is getting much out of politics. Yet what are the alternatives?

On a recent Sunday morning, Mayor Tom Bradley arrived at the First A.M.E. Church in South-Central Los Angeles just as the eight a.m. service was beginning. As he stood next to the Rev. Chip Murray, waiting for the organ, drums, and electric guitar to finish a rousing gospel number, the Mayor's discomfort was evident. With the choir behind him, and the entire congregation clapping and swaying to the music, the six-foot-four Bradley didn't budge. It seemed to me, the only white among these middle-class blacks, that the Mayor and I felt about equally out of place.

My suspicions were confirmed when Bradley spoke. With unintentional irony, he declared, "This place rocks, and if you don't feel it, then you'd better have yourself checked out." He went on to strike a defensive tone, urging his listeners "not to believe everything you read in the papers." He cited his efforts in behalf of the homeless and explained his role in the redevelopment of the black Crenshaw district, much criticized as primarily benefiting white developers. He had little to say about the two issues everyone else in Los Angeles has been addressing—drug abuse and gang violence. Yet as the Rev. Murray's introduction made clear, Bradley was there seeking support for a fifth term at City Hall, though election day was a year and a half away. The Mayor left immediately after his talk to visit nine other congregations that morning. He was followed at the podium by a woman soliciting contributions to the United Negro College Fund and a young man selling burial insurance.

Bradley is in trouble. His problems with former liberal allies over his support for coastal oil drilling and other pro-development positions have become increasingly obvious. The emergent slow-growth movement scored a big coup last spring by defeating the City Council president, long closely identified with the Mayor. Overlapping with this challenge has been Jewish disaffection with what is regarded as Bradley's lack of zeal in denouncing Louis Farrakhan, who continues to hold well-attended rallies in Los Angeles. Moving on this and on the environmental front, Zev Yaroslavsky, an aggressive young city councillor representing a heavily Jewish Westside district, has been challenging his former ally and will almost certainly run against him in 1989. So after fifteen years of staunch support for one of the nation's most prominent black politicians, Jews in Los Angeles now seem to feel that it's their turn to run City Hall.

Yet problems closer to home brought the Mayor to the black churches that Sunday. For among all sectors of the black community, there is open disaffection with Bradley. "He's been so busy being Mayor of all the people that he's forgotten his own," says a young NAACP official. Such critics acknowledge that with a black constituency totalling about 17 percent of the population, Bradley has faced constraints quite unlike black mayors in Atlanta, Detroit, or even Chicago. Nevertheless, in the same election last spring won by the slow-growth candidate, Bradley's hand-picked black candidate for a seat on the City Council was defeated by another black. And in 1986 Bradley's second attempt to become the nation's first elected black governor was a humiliating failure, with incumbent George Deukmejian capturing 61 percent of the vote. Bradley's earlier razor-thin loss to Deukmejian in 1982 could be traced to a modest black turnout. Yet a *Los Angeles Times* analysis revealed that turnout for Bradley among Los Angeles blacks in 1986 was substantially lower than in 1982.

Black discontent, however, is not focused on the Mayor alone. Last spring the respected five-term school board member and current board president Rita Walters, a black originally elected as a pro-busing candidate, was challenged—unsuccessfully—by the youthful head of the local Southern Christian Leadership Conference, who styles himself a "progressive." And this fall City Councillor Robert Farrell, who has represented his South-Central district since 1974, had to beat back an unusual recall challenge.

Despite such rumblings, I was somewhat taken aback when a black labor leader confided to me, "You know, the best black politician in Los Angeles is Kenny Hahn." Many other black leaders to whom I spoke agreed, however reluctantly, with this assessment of the sixty-eight-year-old white politician who has represented South-Central and Watts on the powerful Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors since 1952. Though the Supervisor's ceaseless efforts on behalf of constituents are occasionally dismissed as "paternalistic," whites and blacks are in awe of the man. A master politician of the LBJ, come-let-us-reason-together school, Hahn is regarded as the one man who can get the various leaders of the black community to sit down together at a prayer breakfast and resolve their differences. And when pressed, black leaders also admit that Hahn is so effective in part because as a white he is subject to much greater scrutiny—and held to greater accountability—than his black colleagues.

Much of the discontent comes from young blacks resentful that the older, established politicos haven't done more

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to develop new talent. Thus Bradley has been criticized for not supporting a new face for that opening on the City Council last spring. He chose instead to go with an old friend from the police department, who then lost to another veteran black politico. In a political system whose few points of entry are highly visible offices requiring enormous campaign funding, the age and prolonged tenure of the black political establishment in Los Angeles is an irritant to young aspirants. After ten years on the City Council, and nearly fifteen as mayor, the seventy-year-old Bradley shows no signs of retiring. Throughout that twenty-five-year period, Gilbert Lindsay, at eighty-six the dean of black politicians in Los Angeles, has served on the City Council, and eighty-year-old Augustus Hawkins has represented his Watts district in Congress. Even the second tier of younger black elected officials in Los Angeles—individuals like Watts Assemblywoman Maxine Waters, an early and ardent supporter of Jesse Jackson; City Councillor Farrell; and School Board President Walters—are in their fifties and have served in their present offices for nearly a decade or more. Impatient, many ambitious young blacks have pursued opportunities in business and the professions, leaving the ranks of the next generation of black political leaders rather thin.

For all these reasons, many blacks in Los Angeles are questioning whether their political gains have been more apparent than real. Certainly to an outside observer there is a lack of organizational life among blacks in L.A. today. In part this is because the two ministers' associations that long played an important role in the community have fallen into disarray. But it is also striking that no umbrella organization capable of defining a common black agenda was put together in the city until 1979. There is a feeling, then, of suddenly waking up and wondering what's been going on since the 1965 Watts riots brought so much attention to their community. After fifteen years of a black mayor perceived as heavily indebted to whites, blacks in Los Angeles now sense they have been deceiving themselves.

Another source of disquiet for black Angelenos is the competition from huge numbers of immigrants. In many respects relations between blacks and Asians, especially Koreans, whose entrepreneurial efforts in black neighborhoods are daily sources of humiliation, are more difficult than those between blacks and Hispanics. Yet the more widespread and profound threat comes from Hispanics, especially Mexicans who, though slowed by the Simpson-Rodino immigration bill, continue to arrive in large numbers. And as these newcomers displace the residents of once all-black neighborhoods, conflicts of culture and interest are much in evidence.[1]

Such strains have already emerged in Compton, a small city of 93,000 inhabitants just south of Watts. Much of Compton's predicament is evident as one drives down narrow rutted streets of shabby bungalows adorned with security grates and laundry spread to dry on bushes. The county courthouse in downtown Compton has more security—metal detectors, guards, plexiglass shields—than your average airport. Once a blue-collar white suburb, Compton turned black and is now experiencing a massive influx from Mexico. In 1986, enrollment in the public schools was about 60 percent black and 40 percent Hispanic—a six percent Hispanic increase, and a corresponding black decrease, over the previous year. With a murder rate twice that of the City of Los Angeles, Compton's Hispanic merchants, many of whom speak little English, have banded together to hire security guards for protection. Battles between black and Hispanic youths, say local clergy, are routine. Meanwhile, black homeowners resent the over-crowding and language problems presented by people they regard as johnnies-come-lately.

These tensions have spilled into the political arena, leading to squabbles over whether Catholic priests or Protestant ministers should offer the invocation at city council meetings. Hispanics protest that despite their numbers they have no representatives on the five-member council, and only one on the seven-member school board. They also complain that only 14 percent of Compton school employees are Hispanic. Meanwhile, several black elected officials in Compton, including the mayor, are accused in the *Los Angeles Times* of blatant nepotism and shady dealings with developers.

Compton is frequently cited by Angelenos as an example of the combustible nature of black-Hispanic relations. But as yet the level of tension there remains atypical of the relative calm that pervades Los Angeles generally. Perhaps this is because the small municipality's highly personal, corrupt politics aggravates the social and economic strains contained by the impersonal, professional politics dominating the wider metropolitan area.

To be sure, tensions can be discovered just beneath the surface in greater Los Angeles. As a Mexican-American political operative commented about this article: "So you're going to blow the lid on our coalition before it even gets off the ground." Mexican-American leaders are continually frustrated by the attention blacks get as "the minority" in Los Angeles, while admitting that their people have always taken pains to differentiate themselves from blacks. More to the point, perhaps, Jews have never focused on Mexicans as a disadvantaged group worthy of their attention. A television producer said a mouthful at lunch one day when she told me, "Hispanics are just not hip."

Much of the discontent comes from young blacks resentful that the older, established politicos haven't done more to develop new talent.

For their part, blacks of course resent that Mexicans can "pass"; or, as one black preacher put it, "they can walk the Anglo walk and talk the Anglo talk." Yet to a remarkable degree, black and Mexican-American elected officials work together harmoniously. For example, City Councillor Gloria Molina has close ties to Watts Assemblywoman Maxine Waters, going back to Molina's days as a Sacramento aide and then an assemblywoman from East Los Angeles. City Councillor Richard Alatorre also served in the Assembly, where he was part of black Speaker Willie Brown's leadership team and handled, among other delicate assignments, the 1980 redistricting.

But such ties cannot be attributed simply to the accidents of personal history. They are also explained by the lack of constraints imposed on these elected officials by their largely unorganized, passive constituents. This is especially true of the Mexican-American politicians: registration figures assembled by the Southwest Voter Registration Education Project indicate that only about a third of *eligible* Hispanics in Los Angeles County are registered to vote. Low registration levels among upwardly mobile Mexican-Americans in the working-and lower-middle-class suburbs east of Los Angeles suggest that this group is too busy trying to make it economically to bother with politics.

What are we to make of this political passivity? Some have argued that minority groups would be prudent to eschew politics in favor of social and economic advancement. But in Los Angeles, such a view seems unreasonably optimistic. For a great deal of what we're seeing among blacks and Mexican-Americans here is simply a response to a political system hostile to the organization of low-income voters.

[1]Of course, research at the Urban Institute has been widely reported as minimizing the labor market competition between Mexicans and blacks in Los Angeles. Yet such findings do not argue there is no competition whatsoever. Left unanswered therefore is the political question: how much competition is too much?

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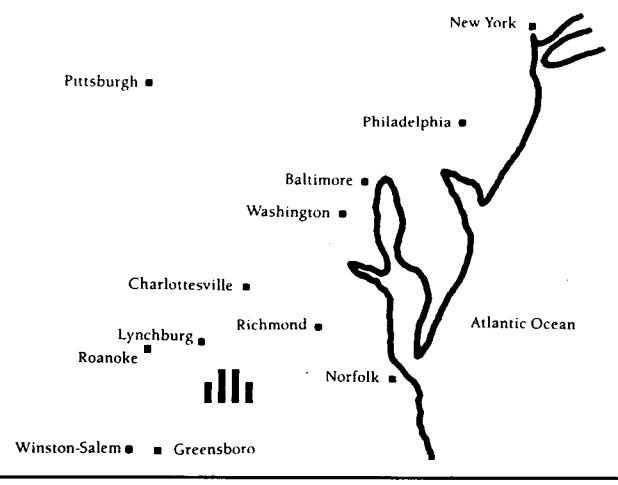

This should be no surprise, for the Progressive reformers who shaped California's modern political institutions on the eve of World War I sought to prevent the formation of ethnic, working-class machines then evident in cities of the East and Midwest. The legacy of those reforms is California's issue-obsessed politics, fueled by expensive media and direct mail campaigns.

Deprived of patronage and strong political parties, poor blacks and Mexicans in Los Angeles are at a double disadvantage. They may have mailboxes and own televisions, but they lack the enormous resources necessary to organize for political ends. And without the party organizations unsophisticated voters need to guide them, such individuals are confused and alienated, rather than mobilized, by issue politics.

Unfortunately, the resulting political vacuum does not go unfilled, especially among blacks, whose leaders seem irretrievably committed to a political solution to the group's problems. As for Mexican-Americans, those eager to identify them as the latest immigrant group about to assimilate into the American mainstream should be cautious. For it is easy to overlook that even the most successful assimilation engenders pain and confusion which make fertile ground for the faddish political movements that characterize California's political history—and indeed that increasingly characterize American politics generally.

Conservatives often need to be reminded that man—including black and brown man—is a political animal, and that politics cannot be defined as a luxury reserved for the affluent. This is particularly true in today's post-affirmative action environment, in which an aggressive press and a political culture that have come to accept notions of group rights look for, and, if necessary, create minority-group spokesmen and elected officials.

The problem, as we know, is that such spokesmen and officials frequently do not accurately represent their constituents' views. To illustrate the point, take the election last May of Lucille Roybal Allard to the State Assembly from an East Los Angeles district carved out as a Mexican-American seat by California Democrats in the 1980 reapportionment. The daughter of veteran Mexican-American Congressman Ed Roybal, the forty-five-year-old Mrs. Allard had never before run for office, and her decision to contest an open Assembly seat caught local politicos by surprise. But with her father's help, she raised $108,000—five times more than her closest competitor—and captured 62 percent of the mere 8800 votes cast.

The political vacuum in Los Angeles might also be filled with rhetoric and charismatic leadership. Historically, blacks have been especially susceptible in this regard. In Los Angeles, as elsewhere, the issues become emotional ones, such as South Africa—though as an activist preacher admitted to me, "South Africa is an important issue, but what does it do for my neighborhood?" Much more disturbing rhetoric was heard in Los Angeles late last summer when black leaders demanded the dismissal of a municipal court magistrate who, in the course of proceedings against a white accused of a racially motivated attack on a black, had innocently repeated someone else's use of the word "nigger" in court.

Much black rhetoric these days concerns self-reliance. In part a response to the stringencies of the Reagan years, this theme seems to have particular resilience in Los Angeles, where it clearly strikes a chord with politically ambitious young blacks eager to assert themselves against their elders. But self-reliance is also the lesson blacks in Los Angeles derive from recurrent disputes with Jews over Farrakhan. As a young black attorney on her way up told me, "Blacks have learned the hard way about parasitic relationships with whites—er, Jews." It may be difficult to disentangle the idea of black self-reliance from certain impulses toward anti-Semitism. Says a widely respected Watts community leader about the prospects of Bradley losing the mayor's office to Yaroslavsky: "I can organize more people and get them more riled up to go downtown and demonstrate against Zev than I can Tom."

Such political dynamics give one pause about the future of Los Angeles. The possibility of spontaneous conflicts between blacks and Mexican-Americans cannot be dismissed. One source of trouble might be the black and Hispanic gangs, whose notorious violence has thus far—miraculously—not crossed racial or ethnic boundaries. So far (outside Compton, at least) black gangs have been killing blacks, and Hispanic gangs Hispanics. Then, too, the 1990 reapportionment will force the strains between blacks and Mexicans into the open. In 1980 these were contained by the Democratic leadership, and blacks lost no seats. But after a decade of heavy Hispanic immigration, black losses will be difficult to avoid. Under such scenarios today's black and Mexican-American politicians, lacking strong bases in their communities, would be poorly situated to influence events. And the freedom from accountability that up to now has permitted them to finesse or ignore such tensions would translate into irrelevance. □

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Reid Buckley

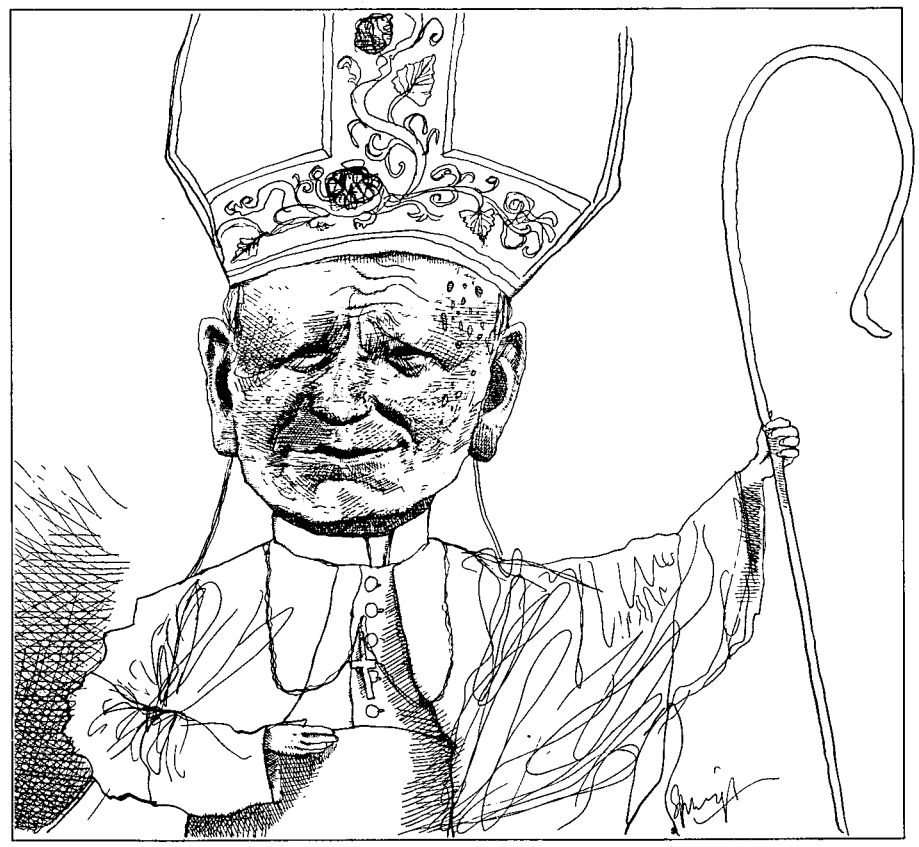
DOES THE POPE LOVE AMERICA?

In the wake of *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, conservatives are crying "foul!" But during his visit to the U.S. last fall, John Paul left hints they missed.

Choirs of cacophony, not angels, proclaimed the good news of John Paul's second visit to the United States this past September. Those today who most earnestly and, in cases, viciously protest the Roman Catholic pontiff are not fundamentalists like Bob Jones, nor even Ku Klux Klanners. They are (in order of fanaticism) feminists, homosexuals, and assorted *soi-disant* Catholics who persist in so styling themselves though they "dissent" from some of the Church's fundamental doctrines, such as the sinfulness of premarital sex, the prohibition against contraceptives, and the absolute outlawing of abortion. The most bitter and intractable of these protesters might be epitomized by the lapsed nun of lesbian inclinations whose milk of humankindness is curdled because Church law does not permit her to be ordained. The most frenetic and nonplussed of his antagonists are the network intelligentsia.

Those folk do not understand the phenomenon of John Paul at all. Of last fall's visit Tom Brokaw of NBC gloomily predicted (just as the Alitalia version of *Shepherd One* was touching down) that it would be fraught with "confrontation" on account of the Holy Father's "traditional views." His brethren of the tube kept asking, rhetorically and of others, Will not the Pope cut and trim just a teensy bit on the doctrinal issues to accommodate his "restive" flock? Oh, they were a scream. They cannot really credit someone who will compromise neither jot nor tittle. They don't know how to handle—indeed, what to think of—this man who has been elevated to the status of Pope, because he does not traffic in, and cares nothing for, Gallup polls. He is addressed as "His Holiness," a courtesy that they unctuously observe. He is—his miter proclaims him—*Vicar of Christ* (an incomprehensible status, an impossible claim, a stumbling block and an absurdity to Messrs. Jennings and Rather and Brokaw), whose (Christ's) truth cannot be trimmed by human agency. But surely . . .

ABC featured a "Special Report" that night, in which anchorman Peter Jennings explained why American Catholics, once so docile to the dictates of the Vatican, are today so rebellious. When Catholics stemmed mostly from immigrant families, their religious identity marked them: they were uneducated, ignorant, and servile. Now: they are mainstream Americans. Upwardly mobile. Educated. And therefore—the inference—no longer peasant-stupid submissive to archaic moral doctrines imposed from on high. (This pop analysis was echoed on the other television channels: ill-educated, unsophisticated, primitive folk—you know, like Juan Valdez, who picks Folger coffee beans in Colombia—are John Paul's kind of Catholic.)



It's easy to ridicule the superficiality of media types, which is to ridicule them for filling the mold their telegenic profession requires. The only people in our society who understand John Paul less are intellectual Roman Catholic liberal-democratic defenders of the capitalist system by which we flourish, whom, with his recently published encyclical, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* ("The Social Concerns of the Church"), he has smitten. Because they—we right-wingers—have mislaid the meaning of liberty, the social and political right of self-determination, which derives from the precious gift of free will. In that gift inhered moral obligation.

"The only freedom that truly can satisfy is the freedom to do what we ought. . . ." This, said the Pope in his rejoinder to President Reagan's words of greeting in Miami, is the freedom that sets us free. And these words he repeated on the morrow to the students of the University of South Carolina, of whom 98 percent (or something) hail from Protestant homes, and of whom probably 80 percent debauch on all available occasions, and of whom maybe 1 percent understood what he was talking about, yet who cheered him wildly. From the first hour of his visit, the Pope gave every signal that indeed he was not going to bend Church teaching to accommodate happy Protestant pagans or bitterly estranged Catholics, also in many cases pagan. He came on an ecumenical mission. But he was here first of all to evangelize that increasing near-majority of his flock who are sorely in need of instruction in the tenets of their faith and in complex teachings on moral and sexual *and also social-philosophical issues.* John Paul was on a mission to his own, his faithful, who help to constitute and, merely by choosing to exist in it, to an indefinable degree tolerate and condone a society that he has no illusions about.

John Paul, you see, was on a mission to another group also of Peter Jennings's acculturated, educated, and sophisticated Catholics—good folk, decent and moral folk, who pledge their intellectual allegiance to the grave errors against charity and justice irremediably at the root of our society, which is its irredeemable (*pace* Michael Novak and George Gilder) materialism. He was here not only wielding a sword of contradiction, but wielding it in rebuke.

At the planeside ceremonies in Miami that night, President Reagan quoted (stumbling so badly over the pronunciation of the name that it was painfully evident he had never himself read the man) Catholic philosopher Jacques Maritain on the Constitution, whose

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200th anniversary, he reminded the Pope, we were in 1987 celebrating, saying of it:

> The Founding Fathers were neither metaphysicians nor theologians, but their philosophy of life and their political philosophy, their notion of natural law and human rights, were permeated with concepts worked out by Christian reason and backed up by an unshakable religious feeling.

"From the first, then," concluded Reagan, " our nation embraced the belief that the individual is sacred—and that as God Himself respects human liberty, so too must the state . . ."

To which the Pope tactfully (and ominously) replied:

> We thank you [the American people] for the goodness and sanctity, the kindness and wisdom, with which you have helped the entire world . . .

He then declared that he had come as pastor of American Catholics, to "preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all who will listen to me." Imposing his authority, he set the tone for his mission:

> I come as a friend of the poor, and the sick, and the dying; those who are struggling with the problem of each day; those who are rising and falling and stumbling on the journey of life; those who are seeking and discovering, and those not yet finding, *the deep meaning of* [emphasis added] "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness . . ." God bless America.

He was giving notice by "the deep meaning of the pursuit of happiness" that he was invoking the Almighty's blessing on a specific Christian perspective of America—wherewith he gently slapped Ronald Reagan's glibness on the wrist, adverting to that meaning no longer comprehended by our hedonistic society. What the phrase is now exclusively taken to signify—the pursuit of worldly goods and pleasures—does not recommend itself to the Holy Father. He does not—he cannot—love our present society, and though in *Sollicitudo Rei* he recognizes the philosophical and economic importance of private initiative, and the necessary political freedom under which alone it may prosper, he has shocked and angered conservative Catholics by insisting on what is to them the absurdity and outright slander of amoral equivalence between our liberal democratic system and Soviet Communism. "I am referring," he writes, "to two opposing blocs, commonly known as the East and the West." And in that fashion he continues, tracing the historical roots of both systems to principles each *in its way* conducing to moral error, each in its way exploitive and imperialistic, each in its way hostile to human solidarity and subjecting humanity to "structures of sin."

John Paul's conception of liberty isn't the kind that stump speeches are made of, or of the stripe mostly applied to celebration of our freedom under the Constitution.

Conservative Catholics are outraged. Surely John Paul, the Polish patriot who was brought up under the brutal heel of Marxism, and who has witnessed his brave fellow countrymen martyred on its brutal stakes, should above all people know the difference! How could the Pope compare the generosity and nobility of the political faith (for all its faults) to which we pledge our troth to the monstrously evil political ideology that has dealt death to human beings by the millions upon millions and that has imposed more suffering on this poor globe in the past seventy-one years than anything to compare in all history?

John Paul is nevertheless correct on the most profound of philosophical levels. We may be Beauty and the Beast, but we are of the same stock.

During his extraordinary conversations with André Frossard, the Catholic French author (*Be Not Afraid!*, St. Martin's Press, 1986), John Paul remarked that ". . . two sorts of materialism can be noted, theoretical and practical. The second sort [the practical: our liberal capitalist system in America] is the most widespread; the first [Marxism; secular humanism] naturally goes deeper." Totalitarian Marxist determinism is a grave danger to humankind, but "when you speak of the danger that threatens man in the contemporary world you also take into account the practical materialism which appears in the West in the form known as 'the consumer society.'" A "merciless war has been declared" on man's spiritual dimensions. Under the subjugation of both species of materialism, man is in danger of being cut "off from his own depths." There is "the danger of a 'fundamental illusion,' that of man imagining that, thanks to the exclusive development of material civilization, he has become increasingly the 'master' of the visible world, even of the cosmos, without noticing that at the same time he has made himself dependent on this world, that he has subordinated himself to the power of the energies liberated, that he is becoming the object of all kinds of manipulations against which he can do nothing, precisely because he has completely delivered up to the 'world' his conscience and his liberty. And the 'world' has taken possession of him."

It's this that the Pope means when he repeats to young folk everywhere: "The Truth shall set you free." When we become conscious of the truth of our condition, our contingency, and the demands that we must put on ourselves in order to liberate ourselves from enslavement to human desires, then are we free. And that is the true meaning and sole non-eristic value of human freedom, the act of personal will that brings us into concordance with the desires of our Creator. "Freedom" as conceived by most modern liberal democratic Americans is a transmogrified term, an invitation to enslavement, a subjugation of the will to error.

John Paul's conception of liberty isn't the kind that stump speeches are made of, nor of the stripe mostly applied to celebration of our freedom under the Constitution. On a yet more profound level, what is true liberty to the Pope? It's a kind of metaphysical superconductor to transcendence. It is "the 'fissure' or breach in being, as we have called it, which opens man to the infinite—this is liberty. Without it, man would be enclosed in the world of nature and robbed of his transcendence. He would be a 'finite' and 'complete' being, totally determined by external forces and subject to the limits imposed on animate nature, and therefore to a death without hope." Determinism "is precisely this: man envisaging his own freedom as a function of the world and of what the world permits him. On this level determinism, of whatever school [totalitarian or in the liberal democratic "permissive society"], is a denial of freedom.

"As a denial of freedom," he continues, "determinism is consequently a denial of responsibility, and therefore of morality. [The] 'breach' in being which reveals man's transcendence is walled up. . . . His specific and irreduceable [sic] spiritual dimension is denied; to admit this is to regard the epiphenomenon as the fundamental phenomenon of humanity."

He cuts closer in his criticism of the philosophical bent of our society, which is far from the perception of a Maritain. Denial of transcendence can, he said to M. Frossard, "be the practice of a *totally permissive society*, in which everything is permitted precisely because the foundation of man's true freedom is denied. It can also be the practice of a *totalitarian state* where man is only part of the whole, the property of the state, deprived of his subjective character where the laws are concerned, and the object of collective manipulation.

"I think that in these two situations man, conscious of the rules and mechanism of his existence, can discover God, or convince himself that God alone can 'save him from complete determinism.' " But, shockingly to our ears, it "seems to me that man becomes more easily aware of this in the second case than in the first, in a totalitarian world rather than in a world of lax morality. Nevertheless, even in a permissive society, he eventually becomes aware of it. In both cases the transition from enslavement to freedom is usually

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bound up with the discovery of God."

And now he comes down harshly on the reality that we have become, in contrast to the idealization of a Maritain or, before him, of a Tocqueville—explaining John Paul's unalterable disapproval of our society, which no hoopla, no sentimentality, no fervent welcomes, no gushings about the sacredness of individual liberty on our soil—perceived by him to be material, carnal, and contemptibly superficial—are able to sweep aside. "These two systems based on determinist principles," he declares, "are in one way or another programmatically atheist. Atheism is the guarantee of their existence and development, just as God is the guarantee of human freedom . . ."

Thus the Holy Father asserts that we—to the degree that we assent to the secular determinism of the American system—are as much the philosophical enemy of Christ as the totalitarian determinism of the East. This will explain John Paul's warmth with the old, the young, children, the afflicted, contrasted against the distant, diffident, even "somber" side of his character he displayed when treating with the American bishops in Los Angeles—laying out the law to them—and in the correctness of his attitude toward President Reagan (he was manifestly warmer with Jimmy Carter!), chief of the materialist, "consumerist," programmatically atheistic liberal democratic state. The Pope cannot seem to approve of *President* Reagan, the chief of a philosophically corrupted society that has been so prodigally favored by God. It is this unalterable philosophical view of the realities of transcendent human nature that provides the commensurately unalterable foundation for those "antiquated" and "restrictive" and "authoritarian" doctrines on human sexuality, in which his distressed critics on the right join.

"You ask me," he tells M. Frossard, "what principles the Church teaches in the domain of sexual morality. Seeing that these principles are difficult, you express the fear that young people, for this reason, will turn away from the Church. I reply: [the Church] demands what the dignity of the person and the basic social order require. I do not deny that they are demands. But that is the essential point, that man fulfills himself only to the extent that he knows how to impose demands on himself. . . . Permissiveness does not make men happy. *The consumer society does not make men happy.* [Emphasis added.] It never has done."

He presses his position with M. Frossard. "The key is the way we understand human freedom. If freedom is the ability 'to do anything I wish' (or rather, 'anything I fancy'), then it is clear that, confronted with freedom in this sense, not only Christian morality . . . but any human system of morality can be considered restrictive. My neighbor's freedom is then an irritation and a threat to mine; that is what makes Sartre say, 'Hell is other people.' On the other hand, if freedom . . . is expressed in responsibility, that is, in the perception of the truth about human dignity—that of others and also mine—then Christian morality will seem 'liberating' in the inner experience of those who apply it conscientiously and honestly . . ."

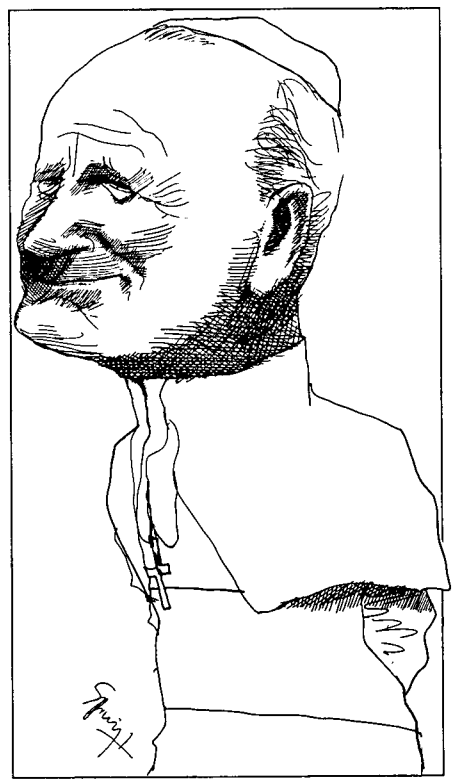
The Pope cannot seem to approve of *President* Reagan, the chief of a philosophically corrupted society that has been so prodigally favored by God.

What's sauce for moral man, is sauce for economic man. "One cannot wish freedom to consist purely and simply in the latitude to act as one wishes. Such a [*laissez-faire*] use of freedom might seem at first 'liberating,' but subsequently it always turns out to be enslaving. Moreover, it is normally egotistical and antisocial."

This harsh philosophical condemnation, striking at the root of our liberal democratic economic materialism, cannot surprise us, because not the most strenuous of ratiocinative acrobatics can do more than praise the (out of the dung heap cometh gold) happy *material* fruits of the mechanisms of our society, which, the Pope nonetheless points out in *Sollicitudo Rei*, do not of their own transfer nor extend to the wretched of the earth, and which—our society in its worship of Gumps-Banana Republic-I. Mammon—is no less detestable to Christ.

Michael Novak notes in *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism* how degraded and deprived of dignity was the condition of the average French peasant or English yeoman in the late eighteenth century, until the advent of the Industrial Revolution and the replacement of mercantilism by capitalism unleashed the energies that liberated at least the advanced nations from basic material want. It is the mechanisms of the free market that deserve the credit for this enormous good. But we have progressed in our privileged Western societies from relief of want and release from privation to an avidity of excessive and unnecessary consumption (just contemplate a moment the mailbox stuffed with those catalogs) that is nothing less than revolting when framed in the imagination beside the awful images of famine and misery elsewhere in the world. And the rub is: our capitalistic, "consumerist" economy depends for its continuing prosperity on exciting an insatiable desire for more and more redundant goods, else the factories cease production, the paychecks stop, and our American way of life of ever mounting consumer credit collapses. Our utterly selfish, vulgar, and—when all is said and done—repulsive way of life.

What then are we to do? The determinism of that other materialist way, Marxism, is no alternative, though it has proved attractive to many Christians of the suffering Third World. "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. . . . Neither was there any among them that lacked; for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need." This is an ideal state of limited duration presupposing an uninterrupted stream of divine Grace pouring on a beleaguered community that was upheld by the belief of an imminent Second Coming. It is not a practical prescription for running an economy; Acts does not relate what the early disciples did once they had sold off all their capital possessions and consumed the proceeds. St. Paul preached—this we do have on record—that those who shirk work should not expect to be fed . . . from which we may infer that even then there were lazy souls willing to take advantage of the community. Paul was a great believer in work. Christians are nevertheless not let off the hook.



John Paul is preaching nothing new in Catholic social doctrine. From the exhortations of Clement of Alexandria to Paul VI's *Populorum Progressio* (of which, indeed, *Sollicitudo Rei* is presented as an updating), the Church has taught that the things of this world, including the gifts of the talents and energies and invention that conjure from mere dust whole industries, are held in common, in trust, to be used by us for the common good, deriving as they do from the sole Creator. If we possess two coats, and our neighbor has none, we are to give him our second coat . . . not go on accumulating *vestons à deux rangées de boutons* by Cardin and Bill Blass. To object that this hard doctrine is otherworldly and impractical is both correct and irrelevant.

John Paul is not addressing himself to the wisdom of this world. What would be the point of his doing so? He is no political scientist, no economist; it is neither a political nor an economic system that he is criticizing. He is the Vicar of Christ. He is telling us what Christ wants and expects from us. And his diagnosis of the philosophical error we suffer from is correct. We have utterly surrendered ourselves to the determinism of our culture; that "breach" in being through which our transcendent destiny is revealed to us has been obscured, and we have become swine. We are enslaved to base nature, and we groan from ills of the soul for which there is no remedy in the materialist, determinist dimension. To the world, John Paul's exhortations may be the stuff of idle dreamers, but his diagnosis of those ills is no less condign; and that his sole, impractical, ridiculous, yet sovereign remedy is to summon us all as individuals and nations to sanctity should not surprise, because no other cure for our condition exists.

John Paul writes in *Sollicitudo*: "The Church's social doctrine is not a 'third way' between liberal capitalism and Marxist collectivism. . . . Its main aim is to interpret [the complex realities of human existence], determining their conformity with or divergence from the . . . Gospel. . . . It therefore belongs to the field, not of ideology, but of theology and particularly of moral theology." It is within this non-programmatic dimension that his criticisms are to be considered—and taken to heart. □

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David Brock

CHRISTIC MYSTICS AND THEIR DRUG-RUNNING THEORIES

An obscure Washington institute is filling America's head with nonsense and making a killing.

For the past thirty years, says the earnest, curly-haired man in the short film "The Heart of the Matter," a gang of gung-ho military and intelligence veterans, a "shadow government," a "secret team" has been conducting its own version of U.S. foreign policy. They've been "killing and maiming innocent people," selling "weapons of death," shipping "cocaine by the tons" into the U.S., "skimming millions," all as part of a "global anti-Communist war" conducted in "the back alleys of the world." The Iran-contra affair, the man is here to tell us, did not begin with Oliver North. "Evil things are done by the human family," he says, "and done in the dark." He enters a church and lights a votive candle as the organ music rises. "And we are here to expose it."

The solemn voice belongs to Daniel Sheehan, general counsel and prognosticator-in-chief of the Christic Institute, which calls itself an "interfaith center for law and public policy," meaning that through lawsuits the Washington-based group aims to effect a shift in American politics and culture. The group was founded in 1980, but even a year ago it was considered just another wacky, moribund left-wing hive, with no more of a following than, say, the Rainbow Lobby or Partners for Global Justice. The institute took its name from the writings of the Jesuit mystic Teilhard de Chardin, who wrote in the early twentieth century of a "Christic force" that unifies all beings and overpowers destructive manmade forces. That appears to be the extent of the role religion plays in the institute's doings.

In those early years, the Christics did not have much going for them. Sheehan had been involved in the case against the Kerr-McGee Corporation brought by the family of Karen Silkwood, and in 1985 he won damages against the city of Greensboro, North Carolina, the Ku Klux Klan, and the American Nazi party on behalf of the families of five blacks killed at a 1979 civil rights demonstration. That year, the obscure institute had a dozen people on staff and was raising about $500,000 a year from groups like the National Methodist Programs in New York, the J. Roderick MacArthur Foundation in Chicago, and the C.S. Fund in Los Angeles.

At the Christics' Washington office, things don't appear to have changed much from those lean times. Several staff members work and live (complete with subsidized rent) in three chaotic Capitol Hill townhouses owned by the institute, which claims to pay each staffer $15,000 a year. But this 1960s-style communalism belies the 1980s-style high-intensity marketing success the Christics are having these days. For one thing, there are a lot more of them: the staff now numbers at least sixty, including attorneys, private investigators, and public relations specialists. And then there's the cash: the Christics are bringing in almost $60,000 a week, 70 percent of it from direct-mail and other solicitations from private citizens, making the institute one of the hottest properties on the left today. (Contributions are tax-deductible.)

The Christics' influence among liberal political organizations has thus been enhanced substantially, particularly on Central American policy. The institute has recently established relationships with an impressive array of mainline groups like the Americans for Democratic Action, the National Organization for Women, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and church organizations like the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries, the Presbyterian Church USA, and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. In all, eighty such groups have joined the Christics in a "Communications Alliance," agreeing to publicize Christic charges and fundraising appeals in their publications and public events. And the Christics are getting noticed in the political sphere as well: the latest Christic literature includes endorsements from Democratic presidential aspirants Richard Gephardt and Jesse Jackson. One recent morning at the institute, a Christic staffer returned from Capitol Hill announcing breathlessly that Rep. Mervyn M. Dymally, a California Democrat on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, had agreed to "help us."

The money goes to cover the costs of investigating, litigating, and promoting what has come to be known as the Secret Team theory. In May 1986, the Christics filed a massive civil rights suit against twenty-nine defendants in U.S. District Court in Miami, charging them under the Racketeering and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO) with participating in a twenty-five year "pattern of racketeering activity" including "acts or threats of murder, kidnapping, bribery and the felonious manufacture, importation, selling and otherwise dealing in cocaine and proscribed drugs." This elaborate web of private covert activities is alleged to include the attempted assassinations of Eden Pastora Gomez, a former leader of the Nicaraguan contras, and Lewis Tambs, the U.S. ambassador to Costa Rica, as well as the selling of narcotics to buy military equipment for the contra forces.

The institute traces the genesis of the Secret Team partnership to the failed Bay of Pigs invasion and the Phoenix program of the Vietnam war through Iran in the late 1970s and, latterly, to Central America, in an attempt to show a close association between the team and official U.S. covert actions or "dirty wars." Among the defendants are former United States intelligence agents and military officers, including former CIA deputy director Theodore Shackley, Maj. Gen. John Singlaub, and Maj. Gen. Richard Secord; there's also Nicaraguan rebel leader Adolfo

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Calero, with several Miami Cuban-Americans and a few Latin American drug smugglers thrown in for good measure.[1] In all, the defendants are said to constitute a "powerful criminal network, fanatically right-wing, financed by drug profits and closely connected to the Reagan administration." The case is expected to go to trial June 29.

The case attracted little attention until the Iran-contra affair. With its exposure of the private contra re-supply operation run by current and former U.S. officials and financed in part from arms sales to Iran, the affair moved the Christic conspiracy theory into the realm of the possible. Iran-contra was also a boon to the Christic strategy of attempting to criminalize foreign-policy differences. Since the scandal broke, Sheehan, a magnetic figure who rouses audiences with calls for a "return to the fervor of the 1960s," and his staff have tirelessly propounded their views in media appearances and in speeches to college and community groups across the country. The *Los Angeles Times* recently reported that Sheehan, helped by entertainment industry people like Jackson Browne and Don Henley, had raised $200,000 in the Los Angeles area in six months: "Seated on white folding chairs in the hot sun, sipping Perrier and Evian waters out of wine glasses, the crowd listened to Sheehan describe the secret team, a shadow government he calls it, and its 25 years of covert activities."

Packets distributed at such gatherings contain a suggested letter to Congress requesting investigation of Christic charges and material hawking a host of Christic wares: the Contragate affidavit, "a must!" ($10); an "education and organizing packet" ($7); the Contragate VHS video "The Heart of the Matter," "ideal for public events and meetings" ($35); and a two-hour audio cassette featuring Sheehan ($12). The Christics say that in Minneapolis alone more than 1,500 private parties have featured the video cassette and they claim to have put 100,000 Christic brochures into the hands of voters in the Iowa caucuses.

Press notices have been uniformly favorable as to the institute's ends—spelled out in its literature as "dismantlement of Contragate's secret team," an "end to the contra war," and the establishment of a U.S. foreign policy "based on law and morality"—while expressing some measure of skepticism about the veracity of Christic claims. (The sign-in book at the Christics' Washington office one recent day was filled with the names of journalists, representing organizations from the *Nation* to UPI.) Typical was a long and sympathetic take-out in the *New York Times*, under the banner headline "A Liberal Group Makes Waves With Its Contra Lawsuit," which waited until the very end of the article to tell the reader: "Federal agents, United States prosecutors and spokesmen for the CIA have characterized the suit as a political fantasy. Other investigators, including reporters from major news organizations, have tried without success to find proof of aspects of the case, particularly the allegations that military supplies for the contras may have been paid for with profits from drug trafficking."

The story is much the same even in the radical press. A *Mother Jones* reporter recently followed Sheehan to Harvard Law School to hear his table-thumping Christic pitch: "He unrolled the harrowing story of the Secret Team, and accused his law school listeners of trooping off to Wall Street at a time when the Constitution is in mortal peril. And then Sheehan closed—as he almost always does—to a standing ovation. Down the aisles went the index cards, and back they came, dozens of them, with offers of help for Danny Sheehan. The campus crusade for Christic was swelling." But the reporter, after polling an array of left-leaning sources, concluded: "Ask these journalists, experts, Capitol Hill investigators, and former CIA agents, many of whom are sympathetic to Danny Sheehan's general critique of covert operations, and they will tell you that his gorgeous tapestry is woven of rumor and half-truth and wish fulfillment." Despite this astonishing admission, the reporter concluded: "If Danny Sheehan has the Secret Team—or whoever the hell they are—running scared, he must be doing something right."

The Christics have not produced a scintilla of hard evidence to back up their charges. But none of the press accounts has sought to disprove or contradict the Christic allegations or include more than rudimentary denials from the defendants in the Secret Team case.

Iran-contra was a boon to the Christic strategy of attempting to criminalize foreign-policy differences.

It is, of course, precisely in this fuzzy stratus of bizarre charge followed by predictable denial and lingering doubt that the Christics' phenomenal juggernaut thrives. And it is an effective one, as journalists and their audiences not only are more predisposed than ever to take a dim view of the CIA and the American military, but also are increasingly preoccupied with events that most resemble fiction. And it seems clear that even though the Secret Team story has been deemed largely blue smoke and mirrors by all who have examined it, a portion of the public is prepared nevertheless to accept it willfully as truth, filling as it does a psychic or emotional need to make sense of Iran-contra. The point for the Christics is not to prove the case in court, but rather to advance a political cause in the media and in left-wing circles while raising funds to stay in business. "The Secret Team theory," according to *Mother Jones*, is "fast becoming the official explanation of the Iran-Contra events in progressive circles around the country." And that is probably only the beginning.

The Christics have clearly modeled the Secret Team theory on the Karen Silkwood case, perhaps the most celebrated public-interest lawsuit in history and an engine of the anti-nuclear power movement. Silkwood, an Oklahoma plutonium plant worker, had contended that the plant where she worked was unsafe and that she had been contaminated with highly radioactive plutonium. She was killed while on her way to a meeting with a reporter to discuss these contentions. Although Sheehan exaggerates his own role in the case, Silkwood family attorneys put forth a fascinating conspiracy theory, alleging not only that Kerr-McGee, Silkwood's employer, was responsible for her contamination, but also that company agents killed Silkwood to cover up the theft of nuclear fuel from the plant. But recall: although the company settled the ten-year-old lawsuit in 1986 for $1.38 million, Kerr-McGee in no way acknowledged the Silkwood charges, which remain unproved. (Kerr-McGee attorneys said the cost of settling was less than the projected costs of continued litigation.) Similarly, the damages in the Greensboro case were awarded despite the failure of Christic attorneys to establish who was actually responsible for the killings.

In the case of Silkwood, the Christics contend that their campaign "inspired a Congressional investigation, two books, a play, several television dramas and a major motion picture. Activists were mobilized, new alliances were forged, and the Nuclear Reform Project, a national campaign to help towns and cities expand their power to prevent radiation hazards, was launched." The Silkwood campaign was helped tremendously, to be sure, by riding the crest of nationwide anti-nuclear hysteria following the Three Mile Island accident of March 1979. With the same fortuity, the Iran-contra revelations have propelled the Christics and their crackpot mysticism from the fringes to the center of a gathering storm.

The notion that there is a sinister network of current or former U.S.

[1]The other defendants are: Robert Owen, Thomas Clines, Thomas Posey, Albert Hakim, Rene Corbo, John Hull, Bruce Jones, Felipe Vidal Santiago, Moises Dagoberto Nunez, Francisco Chanes, Ramon Cecilio Palacio, Ricardo Gris, William Gris, Roger Lee Pallais, Amac Galil, Hector Cornillot, Jorge Gonzalez, Alvaro Cruz, Frederico Saenz, Ronald Joseph Martin, James McCoy, Rafael "Chi Chi" Quintero, Mario Delamico, Pablo Escobar, and Jorge Ochoa.

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intelligence officials trafficking in drugs and committing other nefarious deeds has been popularized in the past year or so in books and films, most notably in the hit movie *Lethal Weapon*, in which veterans of the CIA and U.S. Special Forces in Vietnam were cast as the villains. One scene—in which a bank president breaks down and admits his participation in a drug smuggling scheme—evokes the spirit, if not the letter, of the Christic yarn. The banker says he had worked for "Air America," a "CIA front," during the Vietnam war with a special unit called "Shadow Company." The company later reunited as private citizens after the war and began bringing heroin into the U.S., using their Southeast Asian connections. "It's all run by ex-CIA, soldiers, mercs," the banker says.

Other Christic demonologies are enjoying a certain vogue as well, as a reenergized left rises up to repeal the political and cultural legacies of Reaganism. A rivulet of books, ranging widely in coherence and tone though not in intent, has been flowing from the prestige presses, all of them positing that in the wake of the Iran-contra scandal, the CIA must be reined in once again and covert actions must be further curtailed.[2] (This, despite the fact that the Iran-contra affair, if it shows anything, shows that bureaucratic intransigence at the CIA led William Casey and North to consider an "off-the-shelf" operation.)

The left has an obvious stake in keeping the Iran-contra affair alive, and so the view that the ten-month, $10 million-plus bipartisan investigation by Congress was somehow circumscribed is taking root, not only in the *People's Daily World* and the *Nation*, but also in respected publications like *Harper's*, which recently sponsored a roundtable discussion on the matter. The star participant was former CBS news producer Leslie Cockburn, a leading Christic mouthpiece. And several Christies, as those who compare them to LaRouchies dub them, were seen on a recent Bill Moyers PBS special, "The Secret Government: The Constitution in Crisis." The Christies, from Minnesota, were interviewed at the end of the show, identified merely as people who had "organized citizens around their state to monitor the Iran-contra hearings, as a way of increasing public awareness." Christic drug smuggling charges against the Nicaraguan contras have been raised before every congressional aid vote, usually by Democratic Sen. John Kerry of Massachusetts, whose staff works closely with the institute. And as if that were not enough, Oliver Stone, who has endorsed the Christics in a public letter, is now making a movie called simply *Contras*.

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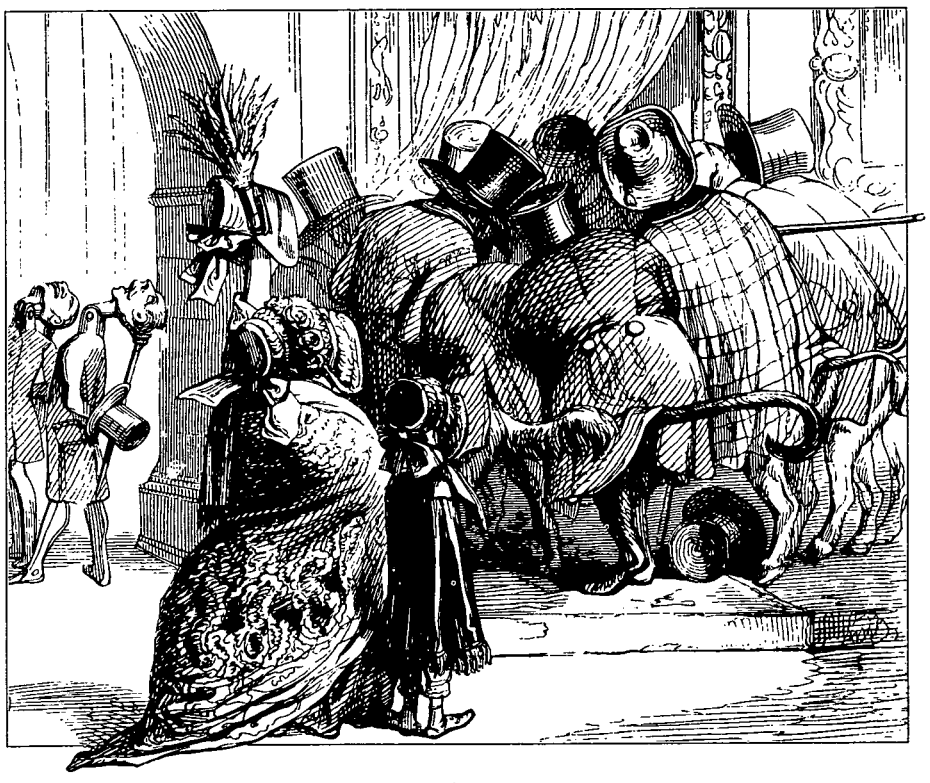
The complex Christic tale upon which all of this rests begins at a small farm called La Penca just inside Nicaragua on May 30, 1984. Tony Avirgan, at the time a stringer for ABC News in Costa Rica, and his wife, freelance journalist Martha Honey, attended a news conference held by Eden Pastora, better known as "Comandante Zero," the leader of the rebel assault on the National Palace in Managua during Anastasio Somoza's reign. Pastora eventually split with the Sandinistas and joined the contras, but called the La Penca press conference to announce his split with the resistance. The conference was rocked by an explosion; Pastora has at different times attributed the crime to the Sandinistas, enemies within his organization, other contra factions, and the CIA. Three people were killed; Avirgan was one of the wounded. He would later claim that he suffered shrapnel wounds, burns, and a mangled hand, though Curtin Winsor, the U.S. ambassador to Costa Rica at the time, and Dr. Max Pacheco, the physician who initially treated Avirgan, have said in affidavits that Avirgan only sustained an injury to his middle finger.

After the bombing, Avirgan and Honey undertook an investigation and published their findings in a 1985 book, *La Penca: Pastora, the Press and the CIA*, in which they alleged that the bombing, an attempt to assassinate Pastora, had been planned by the CIA, contra leader Adolfo Calero, a group of U.S. contra supporters, and anti-Castro Cuban-Americans in Miami. Sheehan has said that by early 1986, the Secret Team theory was already percolating, as stories about the private contra re-supply effort began circulating in Washington. Avirgan and Honey then hooked up with the Christics, giving them a lawsuit on which to hang their theory. The suit was filed by the Christics on behalf of Avirgan and Honey in May 1986, seeking $1.28 million in compensatory damages for Avirgan's alleged injuries, $2.56 million under a special feature of the RICO statute, and $20 million in punitive damages.

According to the Christics' affidavit, the Secret Team's point man is former CIA official Theodore Shackley, who worked for the agency in Laos in the 1960s organizing opposition to the Pathet Lao guerrilla force and was later CIA station chief in Saigon. That defendants Shackley, Secord, Singlaub, and Thomas Clines, a former CIA director of clandestine operations training, were stationed in government posts in Southeast Asia at the time is self-evident. But the Christics charge that the group funded their covert efforts with kickbacks from opium warlord Vang Pao, and continued, while both in and out of government service, to operate their own private intelligence network throughout the world in the 1970s and 1980s, when they were chosen by the Reagan Administration to keep the contras going after U.S. aid was scuttled by Congress.

Many of the Christic claims about Southeast Asia emanate from retired Army Col. Bo Gritz, who repeated the story last spring to the House Task Force on International Narcotics Control, chaired by Democrat Lawrence J. Smith of Florida. Smith told UPI afterwards that Gritz was a "crazy character who has made these outrageous statements before. . . . I heard no credible evidence that would make me believe that any of this is true." There are other holes in Gritz's story. He places Shackley in Southeast Asia in 1965, when in fact Shackley's service did not begin there until mid-1966. He has Shackley and Clines running the Phoenix program after it had been dismantled and the two had returned to



[2] A scholarly treatment of the matter is found in *Covert Action: The Limits of Intervention in the Postwar World*, by Gregory F. Treverton (Basic Books), in which the author argues that the "problem" of a democracy engaging in covert operations "remains unresolved." *The Iran-Contra Connection: Secret Teams and Covert Operations in the Reagan Era* by Jonathan Marshall, Peter Dale Scott, and Jane Hunter (South End Press) is mostly a rehash of news clippings, though the Christic Institute is cited several times. Jonathan Kwitny, a *Wall Street Journal* reporter, has written *Crimes of Patriots: A True Tale of Dope, Dirty Money and the CIA* (W. W. Norton), chock full of unproven allegations linking the CIA and an international bank to an "extra-constitutional" pursuit of U.S. foreign policy. Kwitny, who also has looked into the contra drug connection, wrote in a *Nation* article last August that the Christics' evidence remains "well-hidden." Kwitny also criticized CBS News for repeating the charges "uncritically." This provoked an angry exchange on the letters page with Leslie Cockburn, a former "West 57th Street" producer and Sheehan defender who had relied extensively on Christic information for two broadcasts on the contra-drug connection. Cockburn has now produced a book, relying heavily on the Christic Secret Team charges, *Out of Control: The Story of the Reagan Administration's Secret War in Nicaragua, the Illegal Arms Pipeline and the Contra Drug Connection* (Atlantic Monthly Press). Cockburn's book includes no table of contents, no index, and unnumbered "chapter notes," making it impossible to trace the sources of her various allegations. Nonetheless, *Granta*, the trendy British literary magazine published by Penguin, has just run an excerpt from the book, telling its readers: "To finance the secret war in Nicaragua, the U.S. government not only sold arms to Iran; it sold thousands of tons of drugs—distributed from American airports—into the United States itself." Kwitny now says he is dogged by "glassy-eyed" Christic followers in public appearances because he criticized the group, an experience he compares to facing the LaRouchies.

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CIA headquarters in Langley. In addition, thousands of man-hours were spent by U.S. auditors and inspectors general from 1965 to 1975 examining the American position in Southeast Asia, detecting no links between American officials and drug traffickers. The question of drug trafficking and CIA operations was also investigated by the Church committee of the 94th Congress, which reported: "On the basis of its examination, the Committee has concluded that CIA air proprietaries did not participate in illicit drug trafficking." Says General Singlaub: "The idea that we needed to deal in drugs to fund U.S. covert operations [in Asia] is ridiculous. All of these intelligence programs were official, funded by the U.S. government, and funded well."

Last July, James Lawrence King, chief U.S. district judge of the Southern District of Florida, confined discovery by the plaintiffs to charges made concerning the period 1982 to 1986, requiring them to prove the existence of a criminal conspiracy in relation to three specific charges—the alleged Pastora and Tambs assassination plots and drug smuggling by the Secret Team in collusion with the contras—before permitting discovery to move back to the 1970s and 1960s. In October, the judge ordered the Christics to reveal the identities of the seventy-nine anonymous sources listed in their affidavit so that the defendants could depose their accusers. (The Christics have identified an additional ninety-eight people said by them to "have knowledge" of the Secret Team operation, including Vice President George Bush and Pentagon official Richard Armitage.)

The only source said to have had firsthand knowledge of the La Penca plot is a man identified solely as David, who, the Christics claim, as befits good conspiracy theory, is now dead. In a chance meeting in a bar, the story goes, David tells a carpenter named Carlos Rojas Chinchilla that the bomb at La Penca was planted by a Libyan exile, Amac Galil, posing as a Danish journalist. David claims to be a member of the group that hired Galil, which he says includes contras and CIA agents. But when deposed in November by attorneys for both sides in the case after he surfaced in Canada, Rojas, advertised by the Christics as their star witness, broke down several times and admitted he had no knowledge implicating the defendants in the bombing.

Jesus Garcia, a Florida Cuban, is the source of the Christic charge that the Secret Team conspired to assassinate Lewis Tambs, the U.S. ambassador to Costa Rica, during a planned armed assault on the embassy in Costa Rica in 1983. The assassination plan was hatched in order to collect a $1 million bounty placed on Tambs's head by South American drug lord Pablo Escobar, the bounty to be used to fund a Cuban-American brigade to invade Nicaragua from the south, according to Garcia's story. His allegation was made after a federal grand jury convicted Garcia in late 1985 of illegally possessing a machine gun and silencer. Garcia claimed that Tom Posey, the head of an Alabama-based group called Civilian Materiel Assistance, which has aided the contras, had framed him to prohibit him from revealing the Tambs plot.

The notion that there is a sinister network of current or former U.S. intelligence officials trafficking in drugs and committing other nefarious deeds has been popularized in the past year or so in books and films.

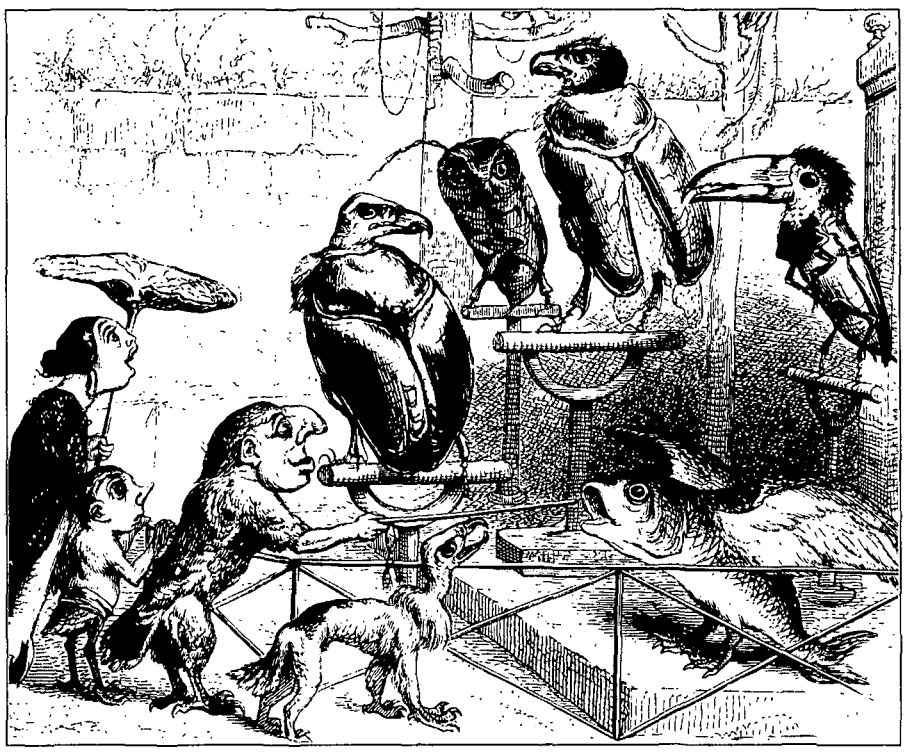
Consequently, the Miami division of the FBI and the U.S. Attorney's Office there conducted an exhaustive investigation of the alleged Tambs plot in early 1986, including a polygraph test of Garcia. Garcia said he had attended a Miami meeting, along with Posey, John Hull, and Bruce Jones, two Americans who owned ranches in Costa Rica, and three mercenaries, Steven Carr, Robert Thompson, and Peter Glibbery, where the Tambs plot was discussed. On May 14, 1986, Assistant U.S. Attorney Jeffrey Feldman wrote in a memo: "The evidence we have gathered does not support Garcia's claim that Tom Posey and others planned to murder Ambassador Tambs." The attorney pointed out that while Garcia had said the plot was discussed in January and February of 1985, Tambs was not the ambassador to Costa Rica until July (he was posted to Colombia at the time). All of the other people that Garcia claims attended the planning meeting fervently deny it, and one of them, Peter Glibbery, could not have possibly been in Miami at the time, Feldman determined.

But there is more. Feldman concluded that "Garcia obtained this story from Martha Honey. Honey attended Garcia's trial in December 1985. On March 14, 1986, Assistant Federal Public Defender John Mattes, Garcia's attorney, told us that Honey confronted Garcia about the assassination plot during the trial. Before this meeting, Garcia had said nothing to Mattes about the plot. Mattes also said that it was initially Honey, and not his client, who suggested that Garcia had been set up because of his knowledge of the scheme." In relation to another Christic source, former Civilian Materiel employee Jack Terrell, whom the Christics claim has firsthand knowledge of Adolfo Calero's involvement in the Tambs plot, Feldman reported: "Terrell has no personal knowledge of the events described. He said that he learned of the plot, the meeting, and Calero's approval of the plot from . . . a journalist named Martha Honey." At his subsequent deposition, Terrell took the Fifth Amendment, much to Sheehan's dismay. (The Christics have never explained, moreover, why the contras and their supporters would want to kill a Reagan ambassador who had been on their side.)

Both of these alleged assassination plots are said by the Christics to be part of a larger criminal conspiracy to finance the contra war from the sale of drugs smuggled from Colombia to Costa Rica and into the United States by the Secret Team. The defendants, some of whom have been involved in raising funds and buying supplies for the contras, categorically deny the drug charges. Shackley says that he was not involved in providing aid of any kind to the contras. Singlaub says that he has raised money from contributors outside the U.S. to purchase weapons on the international arms market for the contras. Secord's role has been well documented in the Iran-contra investigation. And Posey acknowledges that his organization has raised millions of dollars in non-lethal aid for the contras, but notes that the group was cleared of any illegal conduct in a Justice Department investigation.

Last July, the Christics brought their charges to a hearing of the House Select Committee on Narcotics. Before hearing their presentation, Capitol Hill sources say, Rep. Charles Rangel, a New York Democrat and leading contra critic, had scheduled a follow-up news conference to publicize the Christic charges. But Sheehan's case was so amorphous that Rangel was forced to tell 200 reporters: "None of the witnesses gave any evidence that would show that the Contra leadership was involved in the trafficking of drugs."

Some contra rebels with ties to Eden Pastora have been linked to drug trafficking, which is one of the reasons the CIA says it broke with Pastora in 1984. This is, after all, Central America. But as to the Christic charges that the current leadership of the contras and their private re-supply network are involved in the smuggling of drugs, investigators for the Democratic-controlled House Iran-contra panel have found no evidence. A memorandum by Robert A. Bermingham, an investigator for the House committee, said investigators had questioned "hundreds of persons, including U.S. government employees, leaders of the resistance, representatives of foreign governments, U.S. and foreign law enforcement officials, military personnel, private pilots and crew, and examined reams of documents." He concluded: "Despite numerous newspaper accounts to the contrary, no evidence was developed indicating that contra leadership or contra organizations were actually involved in drug



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trafficking. Sources of news stories indicating to the contrary were of doubtful veracity. There was no information developed indicating any U.S. government agency or organization condoned drug trafficking by the contras or anyone else."

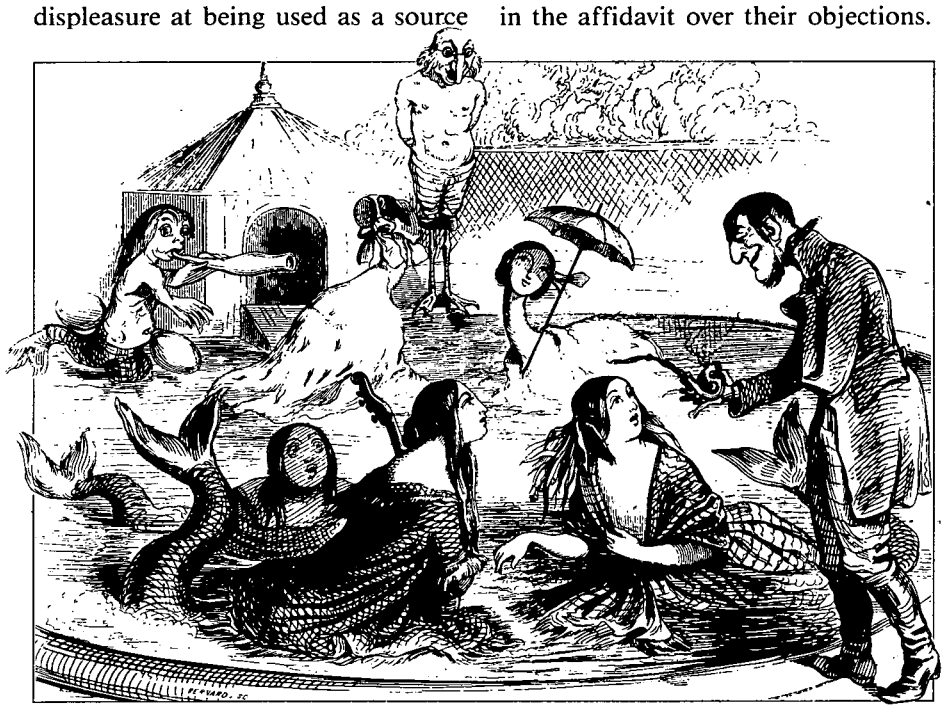
The Christic case is beginning to unravel. All of those listed by the Christics as sources for their allegations who have been deposed in the case have recanted or denied ever making statements attributed to them. (The Christics have so far identified seventy-four sources and kept five secret.) Both Glibbery and Carr, who had made allegations of drug smuggling and bomb plots, have sworn that those allegations are untrue and, moreover, that they were made in exchange for promises by Avirgan and Honey of legal assistance from Sen. John Kerry and financial aid from Robert White, Jimmy Carter's ambassador to El Salvador.. Eugene Wheaton, a former warrant officer for the U.S. Army, the end source for much of the Secret Team theory, has said in a deposition that he has no firsthand knowledge of the alleged conspiracy. Wheaton admitted that he has been receiving about $20,000 a year from the Christics in small bills since he became one of their sources.

Carl E. Jenkins, a former CIA official, is also listed in the Christic affidavit as a key source of many of their charges. In a sworn affidavit Jenkins has filed with the court in Miami, he says the Christic allegations with which he is identified are "either known by me to be false " or "I have no personal knowledge of them." Jenkins continued: "I am astounded that on the basis of his conversation with me, Sheehan would swear under oath that I supplied him with this information. . . . I did not offer Mr. Sheehan any information whatsoever." Upon learning that the Christics listed him as a source, Jenkins says, "I expressed to Mr. Sheehan my displeasure at being used as a source for his affidavit and I again explained and emphasized to Mr. Sheehan that I had no personal knowledge concerning the misconduct he was alleging in the affidavit. At that time, Mr. Sheehan said to me that he was not concerned with the actual state of my knowledge and that he was using the affidavit simply to keep the case in court so that he could take discovery to prove the story. He further told me that he would drop sources such as me once he had developed hard sources."

This raises some troubling ethical questions as to how the Christic affidavit was assembled in the first place.

Christic drug-smuggling charges against the Nicaraguan contras have been raised before every congressional aid vote, usually by Democratic Sen. John Kerry of Massachusetts, whose staff works closely with the institute.

Some of the Christic sources, in trouble with the law, made statements that they were led to believe would help them plea bargain their cases or get legal aid or financial remuneration. Some, like Terrell, got involved with the Christics for political reasons (he turned against the contras after leaving the Posey organization). Wheaton met Sheehan in the course of a personal investigation of drug smuggling, sparked by his daughter's drug problem, apparently became smitten with Sheehan, and collaborated with him in developing the theory. Others say they met with Sheehan to discuss his theories and later found allegations in the Christic affidavit attributed to them that they had never made. In the most egregious cases, Sheehan got appointments with some of his alleged sources, read them statements that he wanted to attribute to them, and included these statements in the affidavit over their objections.



As the trial date in the case nears, Sheehan finds himself in a quandary as each of his sources refuses to back up the Christic story. But he apparently believes, with the apodictic fervor of his followers, that he will stumble upon information to prove the case yet.

One question remaining is whether some hidden hand is driving Sheehan and his compatriots to fabricate such a bogus story with such single-minded intensity. General Secord believes that the initial Christic aim was to cut off the contra re-supply effort that he had helped organize. He is also convinced that "foreign intelligence services" clued the Christics into their communications intercepts, gleaned from the Soviet spy facility at Lourdes, Cuba, enabling them to learn about the contra operation before the Iran-contra scandal broke. Former NSC aide Oliver North apparently had similar suspicions. According to a passage from the minority report of the Iran-contra committee, ". . . North appears to have suggested, in conversation, an FBI investigation [be conducted] of certain individuals based on a suspicion that a foreign government was secretly financing or supporting a lawsuit against various U.S. citizens, a matter about which it would have been legitimate for North to inquire for national security reasons and which, if true, might have constituted a fraud on the courts of the United States. North, a non-lawyer, was flatly told that the FBI did not have the legal authority to investigate such a matter, and did not pursue the request." Singlaub contends the Christics' main purpose is to divert attention from drug smuggling by the Sandinistas and Fidel Castro, a charge long made by the Reagan Administration and detailed in the recent statements of Sandinista defector Maj. Roger Bengoechea Miranda. "It is a classic KGB technique to accuse us of precisely what they are doing," says Singlaub.

Avirgan and Honey certainly have a long history of radical political activity. Avirgan, a TV cameraman who has worked for CBS, ABC, and the BBC, was arrested several times for protesting against the Vietnam war and wrote an article for *Win* magazine in 1970 titled "From Hanoi with Love." Honey has free-lanced for the *New York Times*; they both write for the *Nation*. Orlando Castro, head of the Costa Rican Democratic Association, has charged that Avirgan and Honey are spies for the Sandinistas working against Costa Rica's national security and has tried to get the pair expelled from the country. This was also the belief of Tomas Castillo, the CIA station chief in San Jose, according to Iran-contra committee documents. There have been reports that Avirgan and Honey have met regularly with the Soviet ambassador in San Jose.

The Christics have other indirect ties to the Sandinistas. Sheehan, one of the institute's founders, was formerly on the staff of the Quixote Center, the group which spearheaded the "Quest for Peace"—a fundraising project that sent tens of millions in private aid to the Sandinista government. Two Catholic priests now in Managua as advisers to the government, Cesar Jerez and Wally Kasuboski, have been intimately involved in Christic activities. The Christic Institute also has been a prominent endorser of such activities as last summer's "Hands Off the Americas Festival," advertised as a "rally to support non-intervention in Central America and self-determination everywhere. In celebration of Nicaragua's new constitution, and the eighth anniversary of the revolution. Proceeds to let Nicaragua live."

Whatever the Christics ultimately are up to, the Secret Team lawsuit will remain their prime vehicle. They're now trying to delay the start of the trial to postpone an inevitable defeat in the courts. The defendants speculate that the Christics might in fact drop the case just before the trial date on the grounds that some of their sources must remain anonymous for their safety, declare victory, and continue raising funds off the Secret Team theory. On the other hand, the suit may be thrown out for lack of evidence. But the pounds of documents, bank and telephone records, and credit card receipts of the twenty-nine defendants already in the Christics' hands should be enough to keep the rumor mills of the left churning for quite some time. Legal action against the participants in the Iran-contra affair in the wake of recent indictments will also keep the Christic charges in the news. The Christics may even seek to include Oliver North and John Poindexter as defendants in the case, now that both have left U.S. government service. In any case, says Singlaub, "the Christics really can't lose." But perhaps, if the charges come to be known as a sham, the liberal groups that have hitched their wagons to this particular evanescent star will come to regret it yet. □

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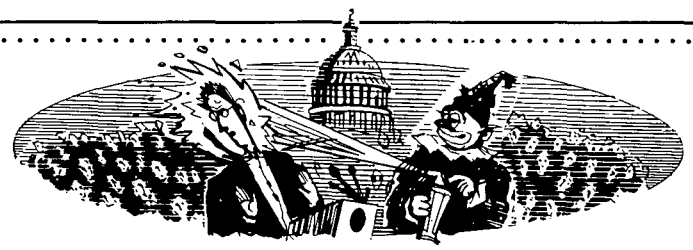

JESSE'S OLD PALS

by Andrew Ferguson

The mainstreaming of Jesse Jackson has been one of the recurrent stories of the presidential campaign, popping up every couple of primaries or so, and his new "moderation" is held to be the reason for his recent successes. Over the past few months Jesse has proved that in Democratic primaries he can sweep the black vote and pull down somewhat less than ten percent of the white liberal vote, which makes him, as the media like to put it, "viable": meaning that in a national election—if he retained his iron grip on these constituencies—he would only lose by a margin of about 65 percent.

How to account for Jackson's development as a statesman—his rise to viablenesshood? The sufficient cause has been an adoring press, speckled with passages like this one from Paul Taylor, a first-stringer on the *Washington Post*'s campaign staff: "The more Jackson achieves, the more movingly he is able to chronicle the journey that got him there—as a parable, he says, 'for what is best about America.' And when he has told audiences this week, 'When I win, we can all win,' he has brought goosebumps, throat lumps, tears of joy and the gift of hope—and not just to blacks."

Taylor was writing from the press section, where the "goosebumps and throat lumps" (the master's impressive poesy is rubbing off) are probably in abundance; but dispatches composed in such caldrons of high emotion are usually incomplete. In referring to "the journey that got him there," for example, Taylor doesn't mention that Jesse hasn't done an honest day's work in twenty years—a record even more impressive than that of professional "public servants" like Bob Dole and Richard Gephardt. Jesse's own Horatio Alger story has been realized by means that require less discipline and less energy: squeezing tithes from middle-class blacks, mau-mauing corporate liberals, conspiring with federal bureaucrats, shaking down television stations for thousands of hours of free (and highly sympathetic) coverage, and so on. Maybe that's what Jesse means when he says, "I'm a tree-shaker not a jelly-maker." Then again, maybe not.

There's a second reason for Jesse's baptism in the mainstream, one for which he himself is more directly responsible. With a degree of difficulty we will never know, he has kept his most obvious impulses to radicalism in check, largely by freeing himself of guilt by association. There have been no more trips to Syria and ("Viva Fidel!") Cuba. Bert Lance, always considered a moderate Democrat, is now his closest campaign adviser. The wife—even more radical than Jesse—has been staying home. No more valentines to Arafat. And most conspicuously, there have been no more bear hugs for Minister Louis Farrakhan, the Nation of Islam leader who proved so inconvenient in 1984.

Farrakhan came to Washington recently, appearing at the University of the District of Columbia on a double bill with Dr. Lenora Fulani, another early Jackson supporter who is now running for President herself, as an independent—"the first African-American woman ever to qualify for federal primary matching funds." Farrakhan had been invited by the UDC student government, which agreed to pay him $7,500, plus $1,000 in expenses. This figure struck some people as rather a high price to pay an anti-Semitic lunatic for a two-hour rave-up, and there was controversy. I was glad, however, when the protests failed to cause the students to rescind the invitation, because I was eager to reconnoiter the boosters who launched Jesse in 1984 but whom he has now jettisoned, like spent fuel, as he soars into respectability. It's a mistake I won't make twice.

UDC is only ten years old, and its buildings, designed during that unfortunate lagtime of the post-Bauhaus, pre-post-modernist mid-seventies, are angled together from slabs of poured concrete. Farrakhan and Dr. Fulani were to speak in the gymnasium, atop a hill overlooking Connecticut Avenue. It's an austere building, relieved only by small terraces jutting out at various levels along the outer walls. As I climbed the hill I noticed that on each terrace burly young black men were standing at attention. Each had the trademark close-cropped haircut, and each wore the Nation of Islam uniform: black double-breasted suit with padded shoulders, freshly pressed white shirt, and extra-small bright-red bow tie. The closer I got the more of them I saw, until, entering the gym through the press entrance, I had counted upwards of fifteen. Inside the gym there were many more. Under such a circumstance, Farrakhan's fee seemed more than reasonable: $7,500 wouldn't buy these big guys *lunch*.

In a holding area inside the gym one of the bodyguards gave me an expert body-search, and confiscated my miniature Swiss Army knife with the four different functions. I'm unsure what he thought the danger was—maybe I was planning to charge the stage and hurl the Minister to the ground and trim his fingernails—but whatever friendliness the guards were inclined to show evaporated about then. They ushered me into the gym and set me in the first row, directly in front of the stage where Farrakhan would speak.

With a half hour to show time, the gym was still half-empty; the crowd arrived in a trickle through the bottleneck created by the friskers at the front door. I struck up a conversation with a couple photographers who were milling around—a play for the kind of amused, another-day-another-dollar chit-chat common to reporters at such events, an act of Fourth Estate solidarity. I thought it might loosen up the tight ball of uneasiness beginning to form in my stomach.

"We'll be lucky if they start this thing in an hour," one of them told me. "I saw him in Madison Square Garden, and they searched every one of the 35,000 people. I was afraid I was going to be there all night." →

Andrew Ferguson is assistant managing editor of The American Spectator.

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He asked me who I was writing for and I told him but I don't think it registered, which is just as well. He turned to the other photographer. "I saw somebody from the Jewish press outside," he said. "Can't you just see what he's writing? 'Louis Farrakhan stormed into Washington tonight, spewing his hatred and anti-Jewish propaganda throughout this predominantly Negro city . . .' " He shook his head and chuckled. "Shit. Those people . . ."

The tight little ball got a little tighter, and I took my seat again. Presently the place filled. The crowd was mostly students, attired in the student manner: blue jeans and backpacks, with Jackson buttons and Doug Williams T-shirts much in evidence. There was a smattering of old people, and a generous helping of young professionals, dressed for an evening out. From my front-row seat I made a quick survey of the hall and noticed—contrary to my better instincts—that there were no more than a half-dozen white faces sprinkled throughout, not counting a camera crew at the very rear of the gym.

To begin we rose and sang the black national anthem, which, on first hearing at least, is even less tuneful than the Star Spangled Banner. Farrakhan hadn't yet arrived, but Dr. Fulani, the New Alliance candidate for President and recipient of $300,000 in federal matching funds, killed time with a thirty-minute address that outlined her "Two Roads are Better than One" strategy for blowing a little sunshine into the white male power structure.

The First Road, she said, is Jesse's. "I am a staunch supporter of Rev. Jesse Jackson" and his "profoundly moral vision for our people," she said. But something had happened with Jesse. "When someone runs for the Presidency, he or she typically asks other leaders for their endorsement. . . . It is striking, therefore, that the two black leaders whom you have invited to speak to you today have not been sought out by Jesse Jackson and asked to stand by him."

Not that there are any hard feelings. "I must make clear that I don't take this personally," she said, even though "it might seem as if Jesse has gone out of his way not to call upon us, or even to look in our direction." He can cozy up to the "white supremacist Democratic Party leadership" all he wants to, and if he's the nominee, which she doubts, "I would immediately withdraw my candidacy and put all the resources of my independent campaign at his disposal."

Jesse himself might be moved by this gesture, but Dr. Fulani's generosity probably wouldn't be any great help to a mainstream, viable campaign with all the trimmings; her federal matching funds would scarcely cover Bert Lance's bar tab at the Atlanta convention. Nevertheless, the offer's on the table. And if the Rev's not nominated, there's always the Second Road: she will continue her candidacy "as our insurance policy that the black vote will not be taken for granted."

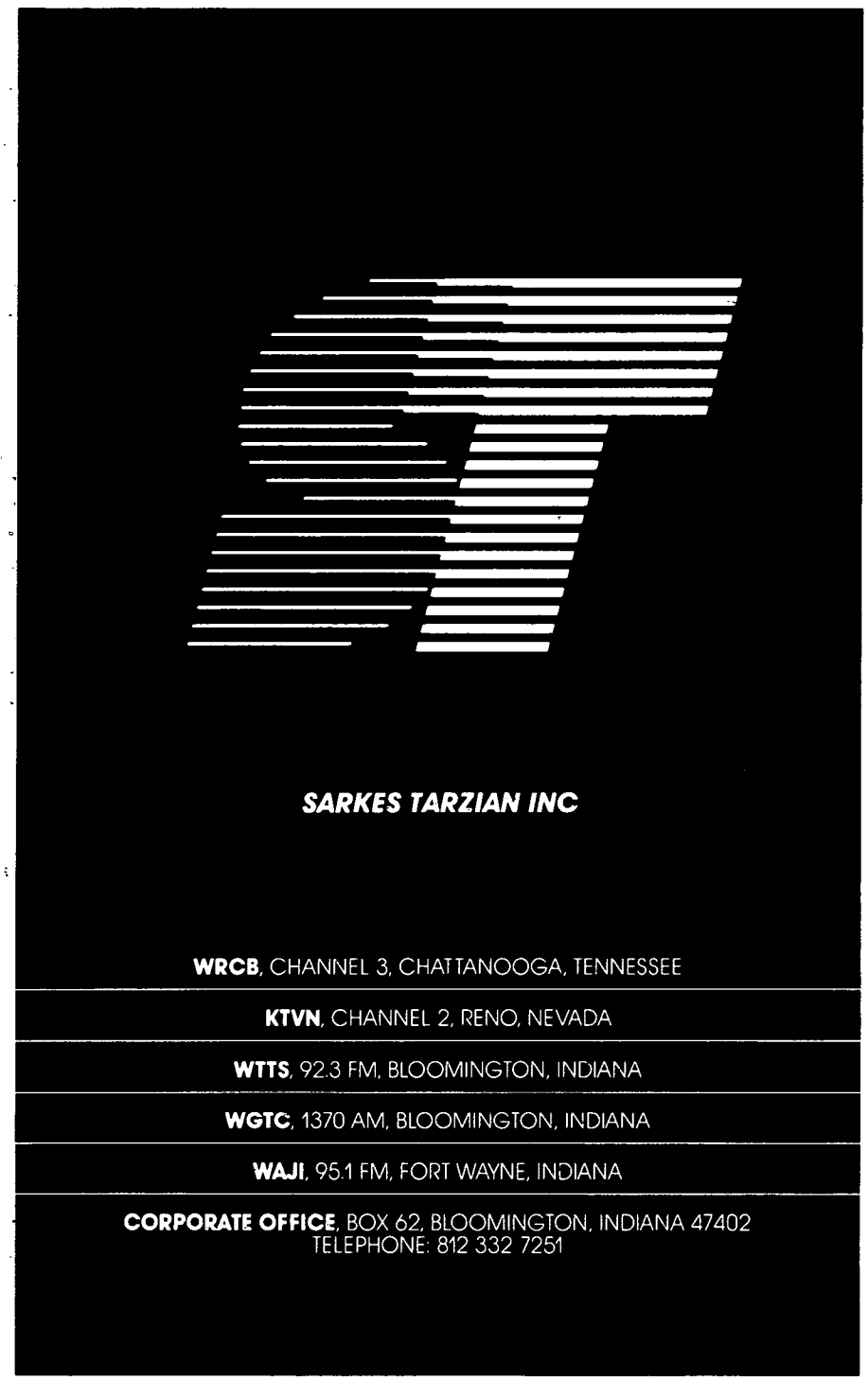
Dr. Fulani was respectfully received—she eventually got a standing ovation, in fact, but this was a pushover crowd. The Minister was the draw, and in time his arrival was heralded by seven very large men—a cookie-cutter vision in the double-breasted suits, the padded shoulders, the white shirts, the little bow ties—who marched with military precision to the front of the stage and stood at attention until the Minister was safely at the podium. Then they fell to at-ease.

Farrakhan is disconcertingly boyish: plump even, with eyes that twinkle behind his wire-rimmed glasses and a snaggle-toothed grin. But when he begins to speak—which wasn't for some time, since his ovation was prolonged—the boyishness vanishes. In conversational tones his voice sounds like HAL the computer, from the movie *2001*. But when it rises to exhortation or censure it evokes an angry sob. As he prowls the stage he is silken. When he speaks of Allah, his body curves back taut like a bow; when he speaks of the white man it descends to a feral crouch and the head shakes and the arms flail the air. Throughout it all a phalanx of five bodyguards follows him in tight formation, shifting this way when he moves to his right, reassembling that way when he moves to his left—sort of like the Pips, by way of the Marine Corps.

The crowd was his from the beginning. The torrent of bad publicity that attended his invitation made a fortress of the gym: here on the inside were his people, and on the outside were the *Washington Post* and the "good blacks" and the media and the white people—not *all* the white people, of course, for there was at least one on the inside, in the very front row as a matter of fact, who was becoming increasingly self-conscious. "All the scholars who are here," said Farrakhan, "and the scientists and the historians: pay good attention and critically appraise what Farrakhan has to say. They're angry that you've come, that you waited in line to see and hear and meet your brother." And what's more, *they* had turned off the air conditioning. (I hadn't noticed.) "They're trying to make you uncomfortable so you won't pay attention to the cool words you're about to hear." At this slight provocation the assembly rose as one and let out hollers of "Tell it!" and "Say the word!"

He spoke on education. "When you're arrogant," said Farrakhan, "you think you already know, and when you think you already know, you stop thinking, and when you stop thinking, you stop seeking, and when you stop seeking you stop growing, and when you stop growing you stop living and when you stop living you start dying and death grows all around you with this arrogant attitude." These hipbone-connected-to-the-thighbone flourishes recur in the Minister's discourse, and when piled one on top of another they're impossible to follow. They didn't seem to bother the audience, though, which responded, so far as I could tell, to subverbal cues: whoops would issue from the scholars and scientists and historians with each break in his creamy delivery, and at those moments when the words started rushing fast and loud the crowd would heave and rumble like a thundersquall. He could have been reciting the phone book. Such discontinuity between action and reaction happens everywhere in American politics; Jackson gets the same response from the ADA. Besides, this was a modern American university; it wasn't the sort of lecture where they give you a quiz later.

The subject of education led to the subject of character, which led, on an upward spiral of intensity, to the subject of Farrakhan and his critics, specifically his white critics. "Everything you've tried to do to thwart the rise of Farrakhan," said Farrakhan, "is meeting a resistance that you didn't think was there, because you aren't equipped to go beyond what you've been taught and trained. . . . You can't handle it because you're stuck where you are with that racist, white supremist mentality. You hate me!" The crowd erupted like Krakatoa. I looked up from scribbling furiously on my notepad and was startled to see Farrakhan crouched on the stage right in front of me. I suddenly realized he was talking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to *me*. "I'll tell you—you and all White America—I've got the key to let you out of the prisons of the sickness of your mind. [Big cheers!] And if you doubt me, try me. I know the origin of your mind, I know where your thoughts arise from. We have an *absolute* knowledge of white people!" Goosebumps, throat lumps: the bodyguards snapped to attention again. "White people are locked in the prison of a mind that represents death, and if the key is not applied, you will destroy yourselves and be *destroyed* by *God* in the New World that is coming even now!"

Even now! Like tonight! Against my better judgment I wheeled around to catch the eye of a white couple several rows behind me. They were sitting stiffly amid the frenzy and staring straight ahead and smiling to beat the band, in a goofy, Alfred E. Newman sort of way. The woman next to me was bouncing up and down and yelling "That's right!" I understood his point about the air conditioning. "Can you imagine these white writers who have the [here he fell into an Etonian accent] un-mit-i-gat-ed gall to call me—a victim of white racism, a victim of *your* bigotry—and you call me a bigot? When you yourself are the standard—the *standard*—of everything you accuse me of? You have that audacity? We have done no evil to you!"

He was still in front of me. I could have yelled, "Right! I agree! I agree! Now get off my case!" But it would have sounded hopelessly white, and no one would have heard me anyway. Slowly the crowd quieted, and he continued, in his HAL voice: "We cleaned your floors. Remember? And when you asked us, 'You do windows, don't you?' we said yes. We left our homes unclean to clean yours. We left our children unkept to keep your children." He straightened from his crouch and started prowling again, raising the roof. "When you were our managers, our agent, you kept the money, we got the change. You run the institutions. You're the *screen*writer, the Hollywood *promoter*, who made us Little Black Sambo, Steppin Fetchit, made us buck-and-wing dancers and clowns while you pulled the strings of our women! You wrote the textbooks that made us hate ourselves and murdered our history with your lies, your lies, *your lies!*"

"Liar!" the woman to my left yelled at me. "You still telling your lies! Liar!" I remember noticing she had an "All Things Considered" bookbag at her feet, but that's about all—my eye for the reportorial detail was sliding shut. I did look down the row past the woman, searching for my photographer buddy, my Fourth Estate pal, but he was standing with his arms raised, hollering, "Tell the truth!"

Things eventually leveled off, although the air conditioner never came back on. The Minister later mentioned Jackson briefly—which is what I'd come to hear, after all—saying that Jesse was finally drawing support from white folk, those who had "been made humble by suffering." "Here comes their white knight," he said, "only he's black! But if you're in a burning house, dying of smoke inhalation, you don't care if the fireman who's coming to rescue you is black or white."

I wonder: Do Paul Kirk and his fellow Democratic honchos feel they're being rescued? Now that they're all agreed on Jesse's new moderation, the preoccupying question has become, "What does Jesse want as a reward?" The consensus seems to be: include a few of his favorite planks in the platform, toss a Cabinet post or two to his cronies, maybe give Bert back his old table at Duke Zeibert's. They're assuming that as Jesse strides closer to the inner sanctum of Democratic power, the more he distances himself from his past—from Farrakhan and Dr. Fulani and their extremely enthusiastic followers. But from what I can see his old buddies are sidling up right behind him. Some friends you just can't shake. □

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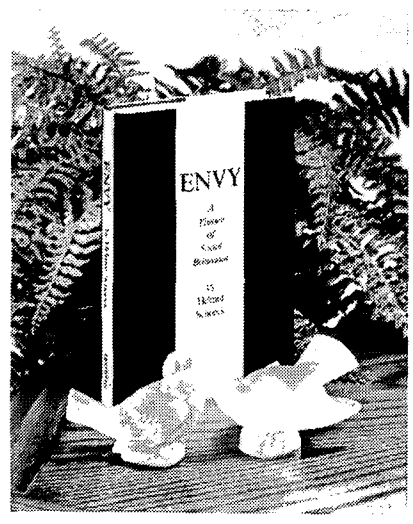
ENVY

By Helmut Schoeck



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Since 1965, Dr. Helmut Schoeck has been professor and the director of the Institute of Sociology at the University of Mainz.

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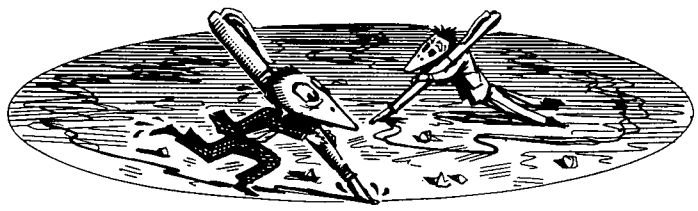

ANALYZING A FEMINIST WHINE

by Carol Iannone

A regular feature of the extensive non-news pages of the *New York Times* is the Thursday "Hers" column. Initiated in 1977 by *Times* editor A. M. Rosenthal at the suggestion of writer Lois Gould, honored in 1985 by the publication of a collection of its entries entitled *Hers: Through Women's Eyes*, the column has been running weekly in the Home section (where else?) as a forum in which women, chiefly writers, examine their post-liberation lives. Surveyed as a whole, the column can offer fascinating insight into the effects of feminism on the thought of contemporary women.

For, not surprisingly, the underlying point of view in many if not most of the columns is some sort of acknowledged or unacknowledged feminism. In some pieces, the ideology is straightforward, for example, an exposé of the power base of male/female relationships (although in 1984 this could hardly have come as a shock to anyone). Writers decry the practice of women supporting their husbands' careers, revile the sentimentalization of maternity, condemn marriage as an arrangement for one and a half persons, complain that public space is a male preserve; and a particularly controversial columnist confided that she may have become a rabbi to avenge herself on what she saw as a misogynistic tradition.

Admittedly, such pieces tend to stand out in their peculiar singlemindedness. In large part, the absolute convictions of heyday feminism, the righteous acclamations, the rhetorical urgencies, the sweeping abstractions about gender behavior have decidedly diminished. The typical Hers column is liable to be more circumspect, rather chastened, even a bit tongue-tied, as the insistent, sobering realities of the morning after begin to crystallize.

Thus there are the columns that bewail the loss of intimacy in women's lives, that attack the Superwoman syndrome, that wonder about the feasibility of managing both career and family, that look nostalgically on the old rules of courtship, that find too much freedom to be paradoxically confining. Some women long for a baby, others admit they'd like a man, while still others have had it with the new sensitive male and the new hands-on daddy. Those who don't have it all wish they did, but those who do have it all seem to be missing something still.

Time and again, women who thought they were remaking the world must instead learn the basic truths their mothers might have taught them had the daughters not been busy trying to raise maternal consciousness along with their own, as some columns disclose. We learn that, sisterhood notwithstanding, women can be selfish, envious, and competitive toward each other. Pioneer feminists watch in puzzlement as their daughters get their ears pierced; a Moslem writer enjoys wearing the chador; a TV news reporter admits she prefers doing soft news to hard; and even the rabbi concedes that she's less than satisfied with her revenge on Judaism.

Despite all the revisionism coursing through the Hers column, however, there is never any serious questioning of the tenability of the feminist view in general or of its viability as a guide to feminine existence. Writers are willing to quibble, qualify, modify, tinker, and retouch, but none will elevate their complaints into a full-scale challenge to feminism. Sometimes they explain the gaps between theory and practice by insisting that feminism hasn't gone far enough; or, on the other hand, they rebuke feminism for having gone too far too soon (the rebuke couched in a respectful, hopefully corrective spirit); or sometimes a writer blames herself for missing the mark. Even a contented at-home mother must examine her conscience for the tendency to live through her family, and happy marriages must be scrutinized for what makes them happy.

With all its woeful shortcomings and inadequacies, then, amply if inadvertently documented in the columns themselves, feminism seems to stand as the reigning ideology of femininity in our time, comparable to the Victorian cult of true womanhood, and the backdrop against which the intellectual and/or professional woman must measure her life. Clung to with tenacity, feminism nevertheless proves to be an impoverished guide to the human condition, bordering the truth with a barbed wire of ideology, as on the question of feminine appearance. The number of columns concerned with looks, aging, and so on almost seemed to prompt one writer to wonder aloud why there is more narcissism among women now than ever before. A moment's reflection outside the feminist paradigm might have suggested that despite feminism's attempt to discourage women from being "sex objects," the habits of intensive self-absorption that are at the root of feminism—"How can I shape my life so that every minute of my day fits me, suits me, pleases me?" asked one columnist—seems bound to foster something resembling narcissism in one way or another. Furthermore, feminism politicizes the traditional understanding of vanity, making it society's fault and thus preventing women from seeing their part in its perpetuation.

In a similar case, a columnist questions why feminism has become "puritanical," as evidenced, for example, in its campaign against pornography. One would like to think that some atavistic, preconscious glimpse that sex is serious, that it is more than recreation, has managed to flicker even into feminist awareness. But because of the jargon in which feminism is mired—woman as victim of sexual exploitation, for example—the movement is unable to make the full case against free sex and pornography (which are harmful to men as well as women) even to other feminists, especially those caught between feminism and the larger liberal left. Thus both pro-porn and anti-porn feminists remain stranded far from the heart of the moral issues.

And don't look to feminism for consistency. Some writers cold-heartedly insist on diminishing the emotional implications of biology—"physical pregnancy . . . means occupation by a foreign body"; some emphasize them—"We are women. We bleed." Neither is feminist thought very disciplined. Whatever the contradiction—the Catholic unable to condemn abortion, the feminist contemplating a face lift, the devout liberal unwilling to accept lesbianism—it is never too great to ponder irresolutely in print. Part of the confusion is surely due to the displacements that occur when the personal becomes political. When all of life's contingencies are screened through a political lens, some essential privacy is lost or seriously damaged: all aspects of life, even, or perhaps especially, those that are poorly understood by the writer, become fodder for public reflection, explanation, and consumption. (A few columns actually protest this stampede to publicity, again without seeing its New Age/feminist roots.)

Moreover, once all of life's challenges have been translated into the social/political spheres, it's not easy to reclaim them; ideology has at least partly re-

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placed the fully felt reality (as the use of too many expletives can drain a vocabulary of real color and energy). For example, jargon words like "nurturance," "intimacy," "caring," and "sharing," now substitute for what has faded of women's traditional access to the emotional life. Women try to solve through feminism the problems that feminism itself causes, try to reclaim personal feeling, private vision, genuine integrity against an ideology of manufactured, public, collective identity.

Thus it can be a source of some amusement to read the columns that demand to know why certain women, successful women or younger women, for example, repudiate feminism. Maybe the successful women want to relish their own achievements without having to glorify the sisterhood; younger women may be sensing the disorder in the lives of many feminists (perhaps by reading the Hers column). On the other hand, one is almost touched to read the writer who wonders why so many women are still in psychotherapy after years of liberation. Faced with a contradiction that might break into truth, the writer retreats into a socio-political explanation, but the real answer almost seems to hover on the page. The reason they are still in psychotherapy is that feminism clearly does not suffice—it cannot confront the conflicts of a woman's soul. (According to one baffled columnist, even Aphra Behn, a seventeenth-century English playwright and the first English woman to write professionally, can lose her status as a quintessential feminist heroine when her life is examined too closely. "From letter to letter," the writer reports sadly, "she swerves from fury at her lover's domineering treatment of her to a pleading reassurance that she would do what he wanted her to.") One wonders if this failure of feminism to answer the deeper cries of the heart may at least partly account for the surprising number of Hers columns on spiritualism, fortunetelling, and psychic phenomena.

But if feminism has not yet reached a crisis of self-awareness, the culture at large has clearly begun to see through the rhetorical surface, as evidenced in even a crude mass market vehicle of popular entertainment like *Fatal Attraction*. When the main character in this film, a single career woman, tells the married man whose baby she is carrying that she will have the child and raise it alone, she is clearly leaning on the feminist ideology that has led many women to think this is a viable, even desirable option. But so far out of touch with her real feelings in the matter is she that she is soon wielding a knife in rage at his rejection of her. When he asks her why she has told him at all of her pregnancy since she intends to manage it completely alone, again an unspoken answer hovers in the air. Because if she can't flaunt her "independence" at him, use it somehow to manipulate and later belittle him, it isn't really worth it; but of course neither then is it real independence. This is the trap of publicity, of ideology; the monkey paints the bars of his/her cage. (We may well be seeing the disorganizing effects of feminism indirectly reflected in TV series like "Moonlighting" and movies like *Broadcast News* as well, in which the conflicted desires of a woman character shape the plot. Conflict is of course what drama and literature are all about, but chronically unresolved conflict is a relatively new and extremely dubious contribution.)

Feminism hoped to arrive at some pure, unadulterated female identity by peeling off the layers of cultural accretion. But when you systematically diminish and dissolve the forms by which people structure their lives, you don't get the real essence, you get confusion (or worse); and, if you're a modern feminist, you write about it, maybe in the Hers column. □

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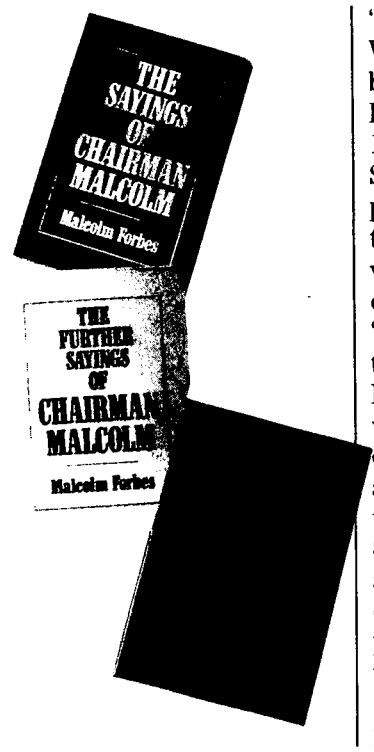

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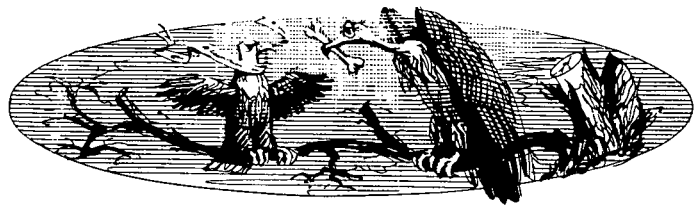

A WONDERFUL NOVEL (SERIOUSLY!)

by John Podhoretz

How are we to explain the fact that one of the few truly distinguished novels of our time has escaped the notice of the literary establishment? The novel is called *Their Pride and Joy*,[1] it is by Paul Buttenwieser, it was published late last autumn, and you should not be ashamed if you have not heard of it or its author. *Their Pride and Joy*, the story of a tragedy in a rich German-Jewish family in New York the last few months of the year 1960, was greeted upon its publication with the sorts of respectable and respectful reviews that succeed in burying a book. It was dubbed "interesting but flawed" in the few pieces that did take note of it, which is hardly the sort of praise to capture the fancy of other critics or the American fiction audience.

The rejection of *Their Pride and Joy* is especially surprising in light of the overheated critical atmosphere these days. Every Sunday, it seems, some novel or collection of short stories is deemed worthy of our most devoted attention. Having exhausted the meaning of formerly grand words like "brilliant" and "triumphant," today's critics show their enthusiasm for the latest books and authors with new and mysterious terms of praise. The current stream of fashionable adjectives would have been considered quite unappealing to previous generations; novels that are "coruscating" or "devastating" or "eviscerating" hardly sound like the kind of fare designed to instruct, or uplift, or entertain, or even merely scandalize. Such books do not even promise to be "must" reading, the kind of novel one has to have read to be up on things. In the last decade there have only been two such books, Jay McInerney's *Bright Lights, Big City* and Tom Wolfe's *The Bonfire of the Vanities*.

What these mildly threatening adjectives do promise the 1980s reader is a distinctly unliterary charge, a sort of sensory stimulation. And that promise is indeed valuable to the literate audience of the 1980s, which is more afflicted than any previous generation by demands for its attention from causes both political and social, and arts both popular and lively.

The inevitable and appropriate response to the cascades of praise heaped upon book after book is disappointment and cynicism on the part of the literate American. Whom are we to believe? What books are we to read? The cycle of critical hysteria and audience disappointment grows ever more poisonous as the years pass. Take some of the serious bestsellers of the last few years; the truth is that Gail Godwin's *A Southern Family* is not eviscerating, nor is Reynolds Price's *Kate Vaiden* coruscating either in a laudatory or literal sense. The years of serious attention paid to writers like Godwin and Price may wear us down sufficiently to compel our attention at last. We may buy their latest novels in large quantities, and finally grant their authors the financial success they crave. Nonetheless, the stultifying sameness of recent American novels casts its inevitable pall; these well-wrought but lifeless bestsellers never take hold of the nation's consciousness. They sink from view and presently become available by the dozens in every second-hand bookshop in America.

But now we have a novel, *Their Pride and Joy*, which makes a conscious and largely successful effort to recapture some of the narrative energy and social exactitude of the best and liveliest American novels. At different points it echoes Henry James, Edith Wharton, and Theodore Dreiser, and does so, moreover, with considerable distinction.

It is precisely the kind of novel that many of us have been craving for a very long time. If *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, the other distinguished novel of 1987, is an explosive and satirical look at life among the well-heeled, *Their Pride and Joy* is an emotionally impulsive and generous study of some of the same people a generation earlier. If they ever come to hear of it, Tom Wolfe's adoring and enthusiastic audience will find a great deal to cheer about in Buttenwieser's novel as well.

Upon reflection, it was to be expected that so exceptional a work would come and go with little celebration. For *Their Pride and Joy* is literally exceptional, with preoccupations and concerns radically different from those that excite the interest of the present-day literary world. Buttenwieser, a psychoanalyst by profession, has devised a portrait of a close, happy, and loving family whose closeness, happiness, and love inadvertently and tragically prove destructive of one of its children. As befits its author's profession, it is written almost as a case study of a childhood trauma that, left unresolved, is directly responsible for the ensuing disaster.

Their Pride and Joy is the story of the last few months in the life of Joan Gutheim, daughter of the marriage between two of New York City's distinguished German-Jewish families. The action begins when Joan, who is twenty, is found in a dead faint on the campus of Bennington College and is sent home so that her condition can be evaluated. She is, her best friend fears, "a piece of porcelain about to shatter of its own fragility." At the same time, she brims with life:

> Whatever she felt, she showed in her eyes. She would drink in everything that was going on, and then she would respond vividly, generously. She loved nothing better than to laugh. She herself was not a great wit, but she brought out the humor in others and made people feel happy. She had that special knack of bringing out what others had to offer. In any crowd she would be at the center, her large mouth wide with surprise, just on the verge, at any moment, of pouring forth cascades of the most infectious laughter, accompanied by streams of helpless tears. Everyone around would be filled with pleasure and warmth; people loved to be with her.

Her father, Alan, is a lawyer for whom the term "civic-minded" was invented, fund-raiser for a hundred organizations and member of a hundred commissions, the kind of man whom the mayor of New York looks to when he needs somebody to "keep 'em honest." Remarkably good-natured, Alan takes great pleasure merely in walking the streets and being greeted by people of his acquaintance.

Alan's ease and optimism lead him to believe that his own good intentions will inevitably lead to good results. A walking monument to the clichés of civics classes, he is not above giving a little lecture to a baffled and embarrassed black teenager with whom he is sharing a subway platform on the importance of always trying to do your best. Though the youth flees from him at the first sight of opportunity, the incident is a happy one for Alan: "He would never know the result of his advice, but at least he'd done his bit. That was what counted. If every citizen would put his shoulder to the wheel, they could really move this city ahead."

The materfamilias, Peggy, is an Altman by birth; her brother Gerald runs the family's investment bank, Altman and Sons. She is the quintessential socially responsible New York matron. Her mission in life is to "contribute." Buttenwieser describes the pre-feminist Peggy thus:

> Peggy had no job, no career as such, but she made it her business to help wherever she could. She spent her days running herself ragged, rushing around town taking care of half the city. She put herself at the service of an astonishing number of people and organizations, large and small. She didn't look for recognition, and in fact didn't particularly like to be thanked. She got her satisfaction from simply being involved with the lives of the people she helped. The good life for her was the useful life.

There appears to be little wrong, and almost all right, with the Gutheim family. Its wealth, both inherited and self-made, has not led, as in so many other cases, to sloth and noblesse oblige. The Gutheim children seem stable and directed. Phil, a law student and do-gooder-in-training, is a dream of an oldest son. He is ambitious and

[1] Delacorte Press, $18.95.

John Podhoretz, a frequent contributor, is writing a book-length cultural postmortem of the Reagan years.

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good-looking, self-confident and possessed of the wicked and hilarious wit of the truly arrogant. Joan, everybody's favorite, wants very much to help those less fortunate than herself and after her return from Bennington works well and devotedly with crippled children at a Lower East Side settlement house. For his part, the teenage Carl was deemed a brilliant pianist at the age of nine by no less an authority than Rudolf Serkin and studies with New York's foremost master teacher, the terrifying Madame Tamarovna.

They do credit to their parents. Alan, who "found the world on the whole hospitable, and always fascinating," sees his own great sociability in Phil, his passion for music in Carl, and his great zest for life in Joan. But mostly, they are the children of their mother, Peggy, Buttenwieser's finest creation. She is a force of nature, a spectacularly self-possessed and self-controlled woman who manages almost always to get her way and, like all benign tyrants, considers this definitive proof that the universe is well ordered:

> For Peggy Gutheim, it was important that things fit, that they run well. The smooth functioning of her life was important, not so much as an end in itself, but because it released her to her main occupation in the world, which was to be of help. And all she asked was an orderly world so she could do her best; a world where things fit and each element had its proper place.

The novel proceeds through a succession of dinner parties, benefits, trips to the opera, visits to relatives, Christmas celebrations, New Year's Eve bashes. Buttenwieser provides a most vivid, sensual picture of the particular joys of wealth. Peggy's mother, Mrs. Frieda Altman, owns a house stuffed with works by Ingres and Corot and Fragonard, an elegant and sumptuous mansion that is a riot of art and flowers and sunlight. The glorious aesthetic of the Altman house is matched by the cornucopious luxury of the Gutheim apartment, whose enormous refrigerator is so lavish Peggy must make excuses for owning it: " 'It was the only way I could think of that we wouldn't be forever running out of something or other,' she would explain to astonished visitors. By 'running out,' Peggy of course meant that someone might not find exactly what he wanted to eat at any given moment."

And yet there is, at the center of this bustling, exciting, and enviable world, a nameless disease eating away at the household. We see its poignant toll on Carl, the only child with real gifts and thus triply burdened by the expectations of mother, father, and grandmother. Carl is indeed outstanding, but he is so suffused with the family's thirst for excellence and achievement that he can never match his own standards. At the age of 15 he already feels himself a talentless failure as a pianist: "Through a judicious selection of repertoire, he could pass himself off to a sympathetic audience as a prodigy. But as he neared the threshold of his career, the ice he was standing on became thinner and thinner. He, if no one else, began to see cracks forming."

Note well that last sentence, which gives a clue to the particularly masterful way Buttenwieser tells his story. From this and a few other indications, we understand that Carl is wrong in his own assessment of his gifts; he probably could be a first-class pianist. And yet his own sense of burden, that he is carrying the dreams of his parents on his thin shoulders, is made painfully clear as well.

Their Pride and Joy is a novel about vicious clashes of the will among well-behaved and well-meaning people. Peggy Gutheim believes that she allows her children to choose their own destinies. Carl knows better, even if he is not up to proving it to his mother. Carl constructs for Joan a little fantasy about declaring his intention to give up the piano and becoming a fireman instead:

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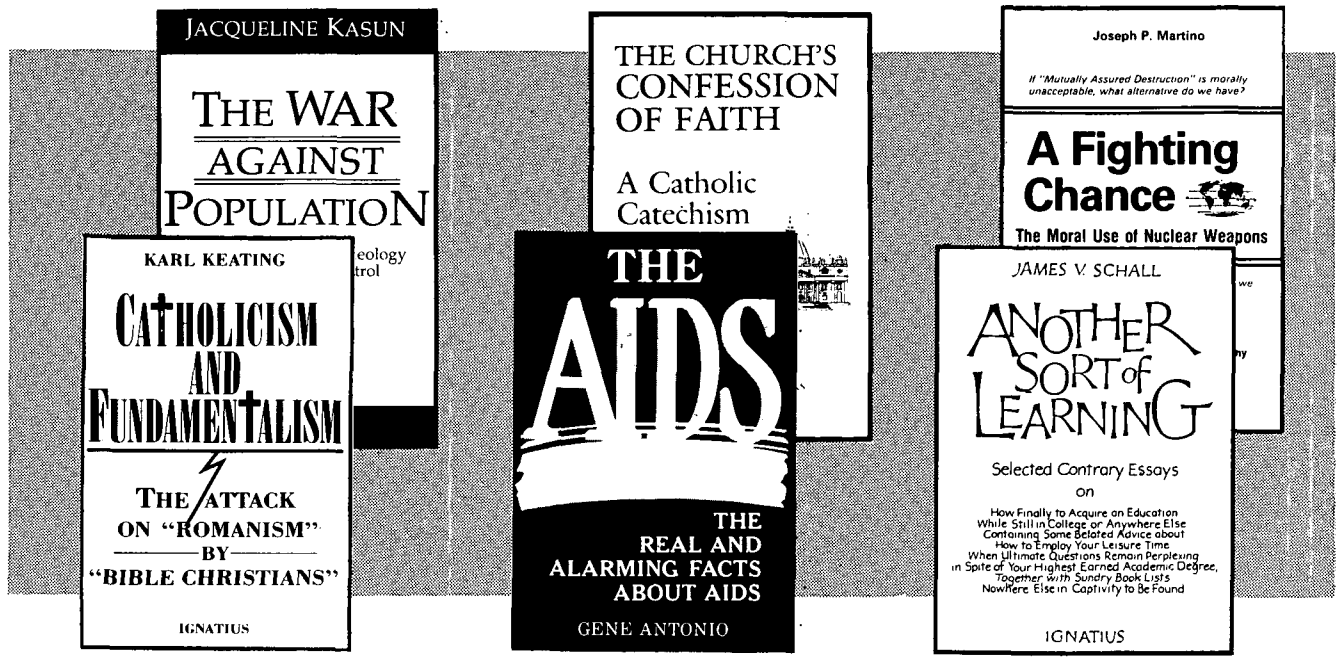
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"Do you think anyone would forbid it? . . . Of course they wouldn't. They'd say, how *marvelous*! Carl wants to be a fireman! They'd run out and buy me a library of books about fire and water and pumps and ladder climbing and get me a little fire engine of my own to pedal around in and probably get me a Dalmatian. They'd find absolutely the best fireman teacher in New York and pay him a fortune to come to the house every Saturday morning to teach me how to slide down poles. They'd tell everyone in New York I was going to be the greatest fireman of all time, because God forbid I should just be a good fireman. That would never do. The painters would be in the next morning to redo my room in red. And so on and so forth. Oh I'd lead my life, all right. I'd go stark raving mad."

Carl never does get up the courage to confront his parents head-on. Instead, he must find his escape by breaking his wrist. The accident frees him from a frightening piano recital for which he fears he will never be able to prepare himself. Although Carl is not responsible for the accident, it is so close to wish-fulfillment that we wonder (as does Carl) whether he actually willed it in some way.

If the shattering of his wrist is the form that Carl's "sad little rebellion" finally takes, Joan's rebellion is far more frightening and ultimately suicidal. The reader has the benefit of current medical knowledge, and almost immediately recognizes Joan's ailment as anorexia nervosa; but as the novel is set in 1960, the closest any doctor comes to that diagnosis is a rumination on the possibility that Joan might be suffering from one of those newly diagnosed and unnamed eating disorders.

Everyone in her society is worried sick about Joan, who seems alarmingly pale and thin and simply will not eat. Their concern drives her to distraction. Her return to New York from Bennington is fraught with tension and leads her to an explosion of conflicting emotions about her life. She gets engaged to her picture-perfect but uncomprehending boyfriend and simultaneously engages in a sleazy affair with a Lower East Side tough.

What is ailing her? Buttenwieser only lets us know through Joan's own half-crazed sensibility:

If only she wasn't plagued by the vaguest sense of guilt, a feeling that it wasn't right to be enjoying all of this; that for every moment of pleasure she consumed, someone, somewhere, was suffering. She was taking more than her share. She had too much of everything: clothes, food, people to wait on her, material possessions. She felt too full, as though she had overeaten. . . . She ought to get up and do something strenuous. Do some physical work, ride a horse. Anything to purge herself.

With a delicate clinician's touch, Buttenwieser charts Joan's steady decline; more fainting spells, an increasing but evanescent paranoia, and painful quarrels with her mother that are meant to demonstrate Joan's knowledge of her mother's manipulations but conclude only with Joan in a frustrated rage and Peggy in a self-justifying morass. The truth is that mother and daughter are startlingly similar, except that the self-abnegating strength in Peggy has been twisted and perverted into a parasitical self-loathing in Joan. For Joan, as for Peggy, intense self-reflection is a sign of self-indulgence and weakness.

Action, not introspection, is the religion of the Gutheims. "Better by far," Peggy muses to herself, "to forge ahead and if one feels obliged to look back, why not remember the best times? Memory is only finite, after all—and Peggy Gutheim's memory was more finite than some—why fill it up with sadness, especially when there is so much to be grateful for?"

The memory that Peggy is seeking to limit here specifically is of a little-discussed family incident with which Buttenwieser begins the book. The family (except for Carl, who is not yet born) is at the idyllic summer home of Mrs. Altman in the middle of World War II.

The incident that seems so minor to Peggy is a miscarriage. So unimportant does it seem that the afternoon on which it occurred is recalled in family lore only because of a clever prank played by the children on their governess, Miss Georgina. What is forgotten is that Peggy's momentary collapse was witnessed by the five-year-old Joan. The little girl, seeing her mother in a faint on the floor, "thought she had had a heart attack and died."

"What am I supposed to do?" Joan asked her mother while she lay on the floor unconscious. When she recovered her voice, Peggy simply told her daughter not to worry. In later years, Buttenwieser tells us, "if [Joan] remembered anything, [it was] that her mother needed no help from anyone, certainly not from her."

Buttenwieser does not dwell on the incident: in fact, my description here gives it a larger place in the narrative than he does. Nevertheless, it is the key to Joan's ultimate decline; at that moment she ingests the spiritual parasite that finally drains the life from her. It is a mark of Buttenwieser's subtlety as a novelist that the thematic glue of the novel becomes clear only on reflection.

There are, in this novel, two scenes of New York that deserve comparison with Edith Wharton. In the first, Alan takes a stroll through Wall Street, a self-satisfied journey that reveals everything we need to know about this kind, pompous, dimwitted man and a good deal about the supposedly gentlemanly (but utterly bloodthirsty) business style that dominated the street then and dominates it now. In the second, Carl wanders guiltily around Times Square, hoping to catch a glimpse of some female flesh in a used magazine store; the portrait of a neighborhood in the earliest stages of its now total decay is captivating.

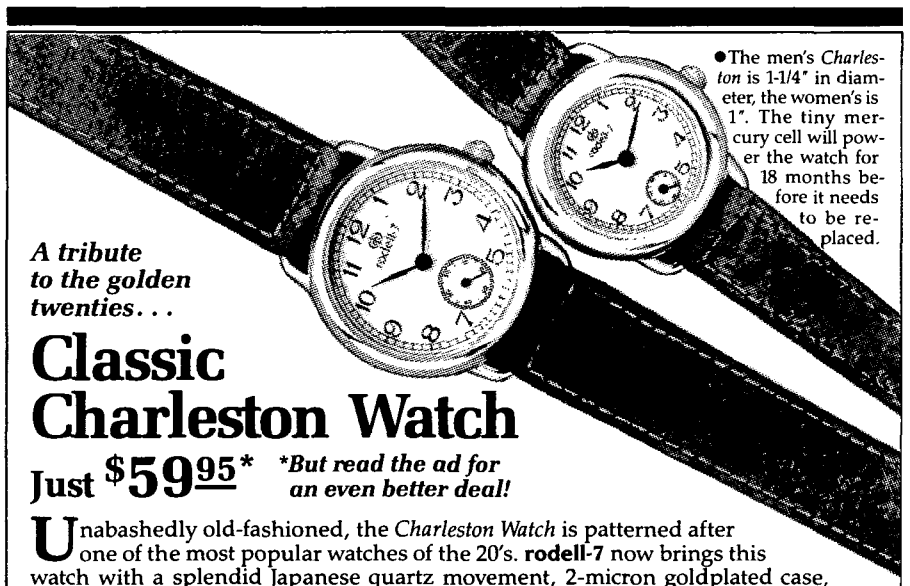
The set piece of the book is a dinner party in Mrs. Altman's mansion, a revelatory description of family tensions and disappointments that may even outdo similar scenes in Wharton's work. Since Buttenwieser is free of Wharton's cold-eyed attitude toward his characters, his portraiture is happily unmarred by unnecessary barbs and slings and inappropriate shifts into parody.

At moments like these, his temperament is closer to Theodore Dreiser's, an author whose greatness lies in his talent for making us see the redeeming qualities in the worst of his characters and the glaring imperfections in his best. And like Dreiser, he reaches a level of intensity and feeling in his most intimate scenes that elevates the reader into a state of high, almost noble sentiment.

Present-day writers who can be justifiably compared to great American writers like Dreiser and Wharton are almost non-existent, and at its best moments *Their Pride and Joy* flirts with greatness. In the final analysis, however, it is not a great novel because of its formal imperfections. The two key strands of plot—Joan's ruinous affair with the Lower East Side tough and a disastrous hostile takeover by Peggy's brother Gerald that ends up destroying Alan's greatest personal ambition—are never quite convincing enough to stand on their own and are rendered with a hesitancy and sketchiness that are all the more glaring for their proximity to material handled with a master's assurance.

Beyond that, Buttenwieser inexplicably fails to develop the fascinating character of Phil, the only one of the children to fulfill the wishes of his parents to their fullest and the only one who never really manages to evoke or maintain our sympathy. It would have been a challenge for Buttenwieser, who understands with such clarity the troubles of Carl and Joan, to explain why Phil is so free of their doubts.

What a rare thing it is these days to come upon a novel so good that it leads one to cavil on such a lofty plane. To say that Buttenwieser's subtle, urbane style is unfashionable is putting it mildly. *Their Pride and Joy*, however, will not fall so easily into obscurity. One wonderful thing about worthy books is that they manage to live second lives when they are passed over at first. How those second lives come to pass is mysterious; a new edition, a committed publisher who will not let it die, a readership that clamors for it sufficiently that someone sees to its reprinting. It happens, somehow. It will happen to *Their Pride and Joy*. □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AMONG THE EDUCATIONALOIDS

THE SOCIAL STUDIES DEBACLE

by Chester E. Finn, Jr.

The great dismal swamp of today's school curriculum is not reading or writing, not math or science, not even foreign language study. It is social studies, a field that has been getting slimier and more tangled ever since it changed its name from "history" around 1916. It is also a subject students seldom like, and one that is doing a wretched job of forging historically knowledgeable citizens with a passion for democracy.

Consider some recent evidence:

•Nearly half the high school seniors tested in Baltimore in 1987 could not find the United States on a world map.

•Half the 400 undergraduates enrolling in their first college-level geography course at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville in 1984 could not find Japan or the Middle East on a world map. One in three could not locate Europe.

•Barely half of American eleventh graders in 1976 knew that each state elects two U.S. senators (and just 35 percent knew the circumstance in which a state might have more senators than representatives).

•On the first-ever national assessment of students' knowledge of American history, conducted in early 1986, Diane Ravitch and I discovered that two-thirds of all high school juniors do not know when Lincoln was President or when the Civil War was fought, and that more than half lack basic understanding of the Constitution, *The Federalist*, the *Dred Scott* decision, the Emancipation Proclamation, Senator Joseph McCarthy, the Scopes trial, Jim Crow and Reconstruction. Bear in mind: eleventh grade is the customary year for studying U.S. history, and four-fifths of the youngsters taking part in this assessment were then enrolled in such courses.

Chester E. Finn, Jr. is assistant secretary for research and improvement in the Department of Education. His most recent book (with Diane Ravitch) is What Do Our 17-Year-Olds Know?: A Report on the First National Assessment of History and Literature *(Harper & Row).*

In education, when discontented with the outcomes, we can usually blame the delivery system: such familiar flaws as scanty, mindless homework; puerile textbooks; ill-prepared teachers; slack standards and low expectations. The field of social studies certainly partakes of all these transmission glitches. But the most serious failings of social studies are conceptual, philosophical, even ideological. Simply stated, what most "experts" in the field want students to learn is not what most parents and citizens expect them to know.

In fact, knowledge itself is in some peril. It was but one of five categories in a 1981 "Statement on Essentials" produced by the primary professional organization in this field, the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS). And under this heading, as much emphasis was given to knowledge about economics, social institutions, intergroup and interpersonal relationships, and "world-wide relationships of all sorts" as to geography, government, and the "history and culture of our nation and the world." In any case, transmission of knowledge is not the overriding goal of social studies, according to another influential NCSS statement adopted in 1983. Rather, the main objective is "to prepare young people to identify, understand and work to solve the problems that face our increasingly diverse nation and interdependent world."

The notion of "interdependency" recurs throughout the writings and speeches of leaders in this field. Small wonder that youngsters wind up not knowing much about the history of the United States or the lore of Western civilization. The social studies *avant garde* regards any such curricular orientation as reactionary and chauvinistic. In his presidential address to the NCSS in November 1987, Florida International University professor Jan Tucker warned against the "nationalization of knowledge" and termed "global interdependence" "the most formidable challenge to social studies in the United States today and tomorrow." He devoted the rest of an impassioned lecture to distinguishing between the "territorial state" and the "trading state." The former, which Tucker branded an archaic concept needing to be expunged from American classrooms, "depends upon the direct control of territory and military strength to provide security and well-being for its citizens." In the trading state, by contrast, "strength is derived from a nation's successful participation in an interdependent global trading network." Teaching this view of world affairs means "recogniz[ing] the interests of other nations and peoples as authentic. In the trading state, a fundamental cultural reciprocity must be assumed."

Remember that we are not here considering the curriculum of a liberal arts college or graduate business school. We are examining what will be taught to eight- and fifteen-year-olds, to boys and girls who are apt to know little save what they learn in school. Cultural reciprocity isn't easy if you've no idea what a culture is or of what your own consists.

Today's fashionable notions in social studies did not result from some abrupt shift in the post-Vietnam, post-Watergate era—though doubtless the left-

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ward tilt and relativistic tendencies of many contemporary teachers are associated with their having come of age in the 1960s and seventies. Rather, what we are seeing is the accumulation of some seventy years of curricular and pedagogical revisionism. In fact there is some irony in the "global" orientation of today's reformers, who would have youngsters start by understanding the oneness of all humankind before turning to matters more specific to themselves and their nation. For one of the big curriculum reforms of the 1920s and thirties was the introduction into elementary school social studies of the "expanding environments" approach, whereby children are first taught about themselves, their families, their schools and neighborhoods, only gradually—as the child got older—widening the perspective to include more distant places and unfamiliar folk. One might think of today's reformers as aficionados of "contracting environments," moving from the universal to the particular.

Often, though, the particulars are never reached. That is why our youngsters' minds are filled with so little real information. Following Dewey's lead, many educators disdain "mere knowledge." For them, the supreme goal of schooling is "problem solving," and nowhere is this more apparent than in social studies. Consider James A. Banks's popular manual for teachers of this field, which starts by stipulating that the overriding goal of a "modern social studies curriculum" is to help "students develop the ability to make reflective decisions." As for knowledge, Banks writes, "traditional social studies curricula emphasize the mastery of low-level facts, such as the names of rivers, capital cities and important dates." That tradition must now be rooted out and replaced by a "focus on higher levels of knowledge rather than on facts."

Even as social studies has become a grab bag of current events, ersatz social science, one-worldism, and opinion-mongering by uninformed children and half-informed adults, it has not played a very large role in the education of young Americans. Elementary school teachers typically spend only minutes a day on it, and if there is need to eke out more time for reading or math, those minutes may be sacrificed. Nor does the subject loom large in high school. The average 1982 graduate had accumulated just 2.6 course credits in social studies (out of 21 total credits during four years of high school). Besides the American history course that most schools require during the junior year, the paltry requirements in social studies can usually be satisfied by such electives as urban ecology, investment economics, criminology, energy education, violence in America, even "Singles Living" and "A Celebration of Life" (which turns out to include units on "death education," one of today's trendiest topics).

If the food is tainted, one might respond, it's just as well the portions are small. Why should more time and care be lavished on a subject that as currently taught ranges from trivial and ineffectual to mischievous and damaging?

It's a risk, no doubt about it. But an ignorant populace is at least as worrisome. That is why in effect we have to fight a two-front war: to purge the field of goofiness and reconceptualize its content *and then* to see that more of it is taught. To be learned as well as taught, however, social studies needs to be allowed to be interesting. Certainly the subject matter is inherently fascinating: full of triumphs and tragedies, heroes and villains, exotic places and strange happenings. But we learn from eleventh graders who took part in the 1986 assessment that today's typical history class is deathly dull: lectures by teachers and readings from vast, plodding textbooks chosen because everything imaginable is "mentioned" but nothing controversial is broached. Seldom is this pattern relieved by class discussion, individual projects, original source materials, or field trips.

Even if soundly conceived and imaginatively taught, no single year course in American history can do much more than scratch the surface of this sprawling subject, let alone the other history that we want our children to learn: ancient civilization, medieval and Renaissance Europe, modern Europe, Asia, Latin America, and Africa. And what of geography? Of where the Nile and Amazon rivers flow, of why the poles are ice-capped, of the routes taken by great explorers and where vast human migrations went from and to?

Then there is civics, in many respects the most difficult of these subjects to teach because here the convictions that students acquire are as important as the information they imbibe. It is relatively simple (and none too exhilarating) to instruct them in the differences between bicameral and unicameral legislatures, the workings of the electoral college, and the theory of federalism. But will youngsters ingest a suitable blend of tolerance for human differences (race, religion) and intolerance for certain human behavior (cheating, treason, slothfulness, greed)? Will they absorb not only the theoretical differences between democracy and totalitarianism but also a deep devotion to the former and a horror of the latter?

Here the problem with the social studies establishment is its relentless relativism. When NCSS president Tucker warns against the "territorial state" and the "nationalization of knowledge," he is cautioning against any clear preference for one political or social system over another. When Professor Banks exhorts social studies teachers to expunge the "traditional" approach, with its "development of a tenacious and non-reflective nationalism," and replace it with a "clarified and reflective identification with the world community," he is signalling his own convictions. If the leaders of this field do not themselves believe that democracy is the *best* of all known systems by which to organize a society and a polity, then it isn't likely that fourteen-year-olds studying this subject will end up thinking that.

A recent episode is illuminating. Last spring 150 prominent Americans signed a manifesto called *Education for Democracy.* Beginning with the premise that the survival of democracy "depends on our transmitting to each new generation the political vision of liberty and equality that unites us as Americans—and a deep loyalty to the political institutions our founders put together to fulfill that vision," it called for the schools to become far more purposeful in imparting to all youngsters the knowledge and attitudes necessary for "an informed, reasoned allegiance to the ideals of a free society."

This clear and rather pointed statement was endorsed by public figures across the political spectrum: by George Will and Mary Futrell, by Ann Landers and Bill Bennett, by Walter Mondale and Gerald Ford, by Anthony Podesta and Jeane Kirkpatrick, by Albert Shanker and Orrin Hatch. It was about as close as it is possible to come to an expression of national consensus concerning the teaching of democracy. But a few months later, in the pages of the NCSS journal, *Social Education*, it was denounced for "nationalistic bias clothed in democratic rhetoric." Since only NCSS members take their journal seriously, the manifesto continues to resonate elsewhere. But don't expect the social studies classes in most American schools to heed it any time soon.

One bright spot in this bleak landscape is California, where in mid-1987 the state board of education adopted a new curricular "framework" that combines history, geography, and civics into a twelve-year sequence that also pays close attention to democratic values, to reasoning and thinking skills, and to such worthwhile social sciences as economics.

Because the new framework will influence both state testing and textbook adoption, it is apt to be quite influential throughout our most populous state. But it was no small task to forge the consensus embodied in it. Some participants wanted to change nothing. Others pressed for special treatment within the curriculum for one or another issue, ethnic group, or viewpoint. The necessary clout came mainly from state education chief Bill Honig, who has placed curricular renewal at the top of his agenda and who values historical knowledge, takes democracy seriously, and prizes cultural literacy for all youngsters, not just the college-bound. The panel convened by Honig included some real historians, old-fashioned readers, unreconstructed patriots, and hardy trench fighters. It took many hours of debate, and some wounded egos and unfriendly feelings are said to linger in the vicinity of Sacramento. But the result was worth it.

If a state like California—and states are where most important curricular choices get made—can achieve agreement on a new approach to social studies, why can't the others? In most, alas, there is no counterpart to Honig and the social studies establishment remains enamored of process, problem solving, and globalism. Although there has recently been established an unwieldy 44-member "national commission" that is supposed to spend several years and many philanthropic dollars scrutinizing the entire field, the NCSS is its primary organizational sponsor and many of its members are leaders of the old guard. This field, in other words, is probably incapable of reforming itself. Risky though it is to urge governors, legislators, business leaders, and other laymen to engage themselves in curricular decisions, sometimes a severe jolt from outside the education establishment is the only alternative to entropy. Meanwhile, most children are emerging from most schools with only a light dusting of history, geography, and civics. □

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THE GREAT AMERICAN SALOON SERIES

JOCK BARS

by Joe Mysak

Once, all bars were sports bars, the crafty Ferguson once said to me. "The black-and-white television was on all the time, there was a photo of the '57 Dodgers on the wall, and there was a good man behind the stick. Now, we have sporty boutique saloons designed by Ralph Lauren, and the bartenders are all women. This is what it's come to."

True enough, but as ever, there are gin mills, and saloons, and sports bars. The formula once seemed indestructible and incontestable. Sports and drinking and photos of the Bambino, referred to elsewhere as the patron saint of good food and drink, are naturals. Yet honest city drinkers are forever damned with the false, or, if you will, *faux* saloons, some done up so handsomely they fool even seasoned veterans with bourbon-soaked elbows.

Redemption, as always, lies in the search for the genuine. Nowhere is this more true than in Manhattan, where a recent tour examined what the more pretentious writers might refer to as the *genre* of sports bars. In the outer boroughs and environs, such places might be scared up with little enough problem. In Manhattan, once virtually an entire city of sports and Irish bars (another worthy topic for a future date), the situation is dismal.

There are, of course, the tonier restaurants and hotel bars throughout Midtown where ballplayers disport themselves. But do you really want to hit three figures for an evening's work, just to look at two Leroy Neiman paintings and a cast-iron jockey under bad lighting? If you want to Meet Athletes, a passion of arrested development if ever there was one, you must, of course, hit such spots; for as a class, the big money ballplayers tend to avoid the riff-raff: professional sportsmen do not as a rule go to true sports bars, and Meet The People.

The sports bar formula is just about incorruptible. A loud crowd, fast and friendly bartenders, a good television, heavy use of sporting memorabilia. Consider Champion's, in Georgetown. Or Mike Shannon's, in St. Louis. Or J. B. Winberie's, in Boston—the site of Fred Sullivan's fantastic eighteen-rum-and-Coke night, when he kept pace with me and the Tough Al's honorable husband, who were drinking beer. We watched the Red Sox lose, and got to listen to one particularly ornery fan who kept bellowing, inexplicably, "One knock for Knickerbocker beer, *one time!*" In Manhattan, one has to go a ways to scare up similar cozy holes.

There is, on the Upper East Side, Rusty Staub's ribhouse, which features lots of good Staub material, including some aged bats and some great sequences of photographs. And the Big Orange can surely cook up a tender and tasty plate of ribs. But there are as many loathsome Met fans here as there are out at Shea Stadium. That would be bad enough, but at Rusty's, there is also a tad too much, shall we say, meat on the hoof.

One reliable adviser pitched the Raccoon Lodge, a recently opened (little did I at first realize *how* recently opened) tavern on 83rd Street and Amsterdam Avenue.

"*Poseurs*," pronounced the mogul Cheney, on first observing the crowd. "They're all fakes. To the last man."

Yet the place looked as homey as the scenes of my youthful haunts, from the dirty floor, to the pool table, to the metal shuffleboard bowling machine, the jukebox, and the usual neon beer signs and advertisements. There were several old "Honeymooners" photographs, apropos of a place called "The Raccoon Lodge," which everyone in the Free World knows was Ralph Kramden and Ed Norton's old club.

Near the pool table, there was even an aging list of names of those challengers who wanted to play pool, and the appropriate stubby, chewed pencil. I sat down and took in the cloud of acrid cigarette smoke and the rich aroma of Jack Daniel's on flannel shirts. For some inexplicable reason there were piles of duck decoys over the bar's back mirror, but I was willing to overlook them. No pictures of Casey Stengel or Ted Williams, two popular saloon subjects, but this was okay. Even Uptown, I could smell out a Jersey bar. I settled further into the booth.

"Get a grip, man," said the land baron. "Take a closer look."

There was a large red and white flying horse tacked on the back wall, which in more glorious days graced a Mobil filling station, and which is now apparently the last word in saloon decor in the big town. There was a girl bartender, who mourned a lack of five-dollar bills. Not only was there nobody beyond the age of 35 in the place—other than one fellow who looked like the famed Ed "Big Daddy" Roth, the sixties car customizer, in full poundage—but the crowd included at least a full score of preppie lasses. Not bad in its way, but not a saloon, at least not one of the gorgeous sports dumps I patronized in my youth.

Besides that, the Lodge had opened just three weeks before.

I had, in sum, been taken in.

Faced with a crowd of advertising men, lawyers, and investment bankers out slumming for the evening, most of whom were wearing white wrinkly button-down shirts—and one who looked as if he'd just come in from the tennis courts—I decided the appropriate talk was of marketing with the Celtic poet, McCorry. "Marketing strategy," I said. "Lincoln should begin manufacturing four-door convertibles again."

"*Marketing strategy*: Budweiser should staple little bags of pretzels and nacho chips to each bottle," Mac said. "Or: Build a bar where you pay $10 at the door, then get to work the stick and drink all the beer you want. *This one would make a mint.*"

This was good, and the way talk should go in a sports bar. We mulled the way certain girls with shoulder-length hair walk when they wear blazers, why redheads almost invariably overplay it, and whether Jack Clark will make any difference to the Yankees, or Bob Horner to the Cardinals. We pondered the pool table, and the presence in every bar of The Guy Who Is Great At Pool, and who beats all comers. This particular one looked like a rock band roadie and moved in a herky-jerky fashion. All well and good, until I saw him take a slug of his, Good Lord, Mexican beer *with a wedge of lime in it.*

This was not a man who was going to knock them back all night—at least, not without some ugly consequences. Then again, this was not a batch of crusty vets putting to flight the day's demons, but a crowd of slightly homesick young folk living The Life in Manhattan. When the girls started to play pool, we took our leave.

"Want a good sports bar?" The Ancient Mariner asked, by way of proffering advice. "The Old Town. Go there."

And so off down to east 16th Street to the Old Town, a fine old place, looking as it should. I stared into the back-bar mirror, and the Iron Horse grinned back. There were some things you could still depend upon. Lou Gehrig was one of them. "What do you have on tap?"

"I'm sorry, we don't have draft beer," said the bartender.

I waited no longer for a word of explanation, but raised anchor. I have done considerable damage in the Old Town, which has one of the top 10 turn-of-the-century bars in Manhattan, but for my sports-bar money, a saloon must have brew good off the wood. This would not do.

For a moment, we ponder Pete's Tavern, a nice ancient place O. Henry apparently wrote in, and vaguely a sports bar, if the presence of some prehistoric equipment and a few pictures means a sports bar. Pete's also contains the mellow memory of a famous double-date, when, after we packed the girls away in cabs to their destinations, the Big Train and I looked at each other, said, "There's a basketball game on inside, and an awful lot of beer left," and returned to size up

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Joe Mysak is The American Spectator*'s chief saloon correspondent.*

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the evening. Pete's is a gentle spot, and worthy of more than a casual look here. It is also not, strictly speaking, a sports bar.

"I know what we want. The Sporting Club. 99 Hudson. The prices are a little heavy. But I think the place has it," said the Celtic poet. And it is so.

The Sporting Club is not old. Its bar is not particularly romantic or aged. If anything, its brass rails are a little gimmicky, and its black ceilings a little high-tech for most drinker's tastes. The place lacks the requisite layers of memorabilia. But it does show just what money can buy in Reagan's America: at least a score of televisions, in all directions, including those wide-screen jobs, except in this place, *they actually work*.

Finally, too, the Sporting Club features an actual new idea: an enormous electronic scoreboard, just like you have at the ballpark with all the out-of-town scores, updated continually, and with a tape running along the bottom flashing details. For a fan of an out-of-town team, this is a godsend: no more ducking out to make surreptitious calls to SportsPhone to check the scores. And there's Moosehead on tap. And really cold air conditioning.

A session at the Sporting Club can be just as jolly as attending one of the brawls at the House That Ruth Built up in the Bronx. One of Ruth's spiritual sons, Mickey Mantle, recently opened his own showcase place, but I balk at saucing it up on Central Park South. □

THE TALKIES

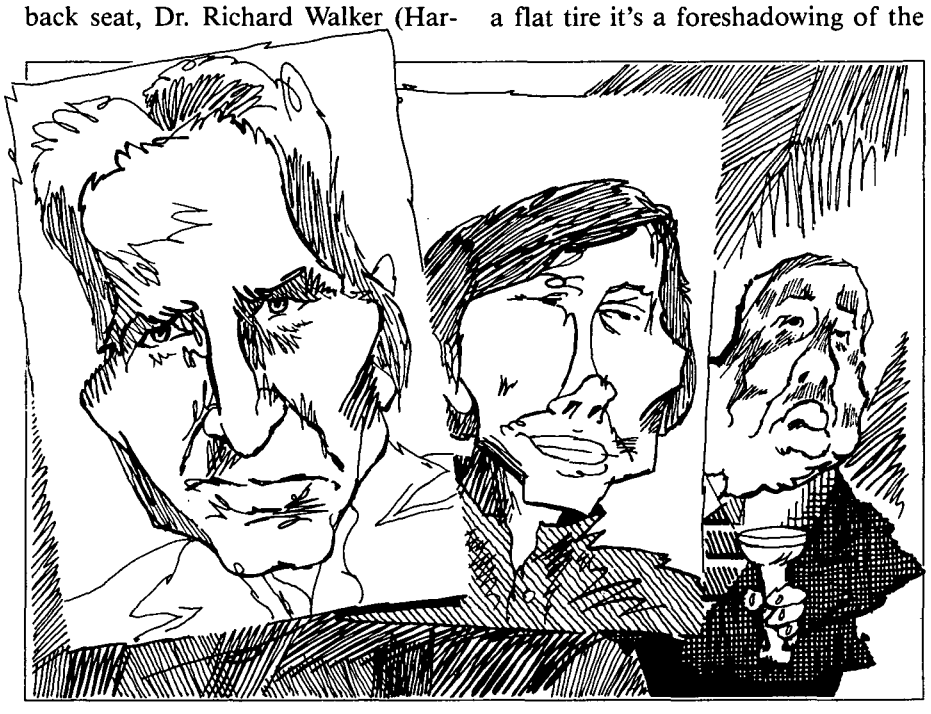
POLANSKI'S EMMANUELLE

by Bruce Bawer

When I heard that *Frantic*, Roman Polanski's new thriller, was very much in the tradition of Alfred Hitchcock, I braced myself for a disappointment. Why, I wondered, had Polanski—the director of such wonderful films as *Rosemary's Baby, Chinatown*, and *Tess*—opted to straitjacket himself in such a fashion? All I could think was that *Frantic* would be another flat-footed, academic Hitchcock *hommage* like *Dressed to Kill*, Brian DePalma's pallid ripoff of *Psycho*. Hitchcock imitation, after all, is the *specialité de la maison* of the typical contemporary film-school graduate, the slick technician in search of a sensibility, the sort of person whose metaphysical cravings seem thoroughly satisfied by a diet of MGM B-movies, Republic two-reelers, and George Lucas space operas. To see Polanski—whose films always have the freshness of visions derived from life, not from other bits of celluloid—playing the *hommage* game with these second-raters was not, for me, a consummation devoutly to be wished. For heaven's sake, even the name of his film was unpromising: mentioning it in conversations, I kept confusing it with *Frenzy*, the title of one of Hitchcock's later, lamer efforts—an unpleasant echo which, it seemed to me, must almost certainly have been intentional.

Fortunately, however, my apprehensions proved to be remarkably unjustified. Engaging of style, compelling of tone, highly distinctive in its "look," *Frantic* is as fresh and original as any film that Polanski has ever made. And this in spite of the almost textbook-scale borrowing of motifs and images from Hitchcock—a borrowing that begins in the very first frames. (Of course, one man's obvious borrowing is another man's vague affinity; and certainly some of the instances of Hitchcock imitation, in this film, are a good deal more self-evident than others.)

Like many a Hitchcock film, *Frantic* opens with energetic, arresting music (by Ennio Morricone) and a riveting image that establishes the film's principal setting—in this instance, a point-of-view shot, from a moving taxicab, of the highway leading into Paris from Orly Airport. (The considerable length of this "take," by the way, is itself very Hitchcockian—remember *Rope*, which contains not a single visible cut?) From this we fade to a two-shot of the couple in the cab's back seat, Dr. Richard Walker (Harrison Ford) of San Francisco and his wife Sondra (Betty Buckley), who are arriving in town for a medical conference—a situation reminiscent of Hitchcock's 1956 version of *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, in which James Stewart plays an American doctor who is visiting North Africa with his wife and son after attending a Paris medical convention. (That film featured a similar opening two-shot of Stewart and Doris Day in front of a vehicle's back window: they were in the back seat of a bus, heading into Marrakesh.) Like Stewart's Ben McKenna, who "liberated Africa" during World War II, Walker has been to this part of the world before—he and Sondra came to Paris on their honeymoon—but doesn't know it well at all. "Do you know where you are?" Sondra asks him as the cab enters the city. His reply: "It's changed so much." When the taxi gets a flat tire it's a foreshadowing of the unexpected turn of events that will follow.



Yet everything about the hotel they check into later that morning is a model of order, serenity, familiarity: there are VISA and American Express plaques; the concierge speaks fluent English; even the predominant colors in the lobby and in their luxurious suite—a relaxing, complementary array of muted grays, blues, and off-whites—are in harmony with the colors of the Walkers' wardrobe. For the perfect touch of home, there is even a Pizza Hut adjacent to the lobby—an all-American eatery which, as the film heads further and further into darkness and entropy, will increasingly seem an ironic comment on the all-American niceness, naiveté, and normality that characterized the Walkers on arrival. With its disconcerting fire-engine red color, moreover, the Pizza Hut from the beginning screams out a warning that everything here is not as peaceful and orderly as it seems.

These opening sequences—in the cab and lobby, and especially in the suite—have a terrific naturalness; Polanski very swiftly makes us believe in these characters and in their easy, jokey, loving relationship. He also very swiftly makes us recognize—as they do not—how naked and vulnerable they are; when Walker, unable to open one of their suitcases, realizes that it is not theirs at all, and that Sondra must have picked it up by mistake at the airport, he sees it as nothing more than a frustrating inconvenience, while we panic—is there a bomb inside? Moments later, while he's in the shower (and in the foreground of the shot),

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Sondra (in the background) receives a phone call, slips into a dress (significantly, a *red* dress), tells him something (which he—and we—can't hear), and casually steps out of frame (thus do people disappear from each other's lives). From these simple, ordinary, everyday acts Polanski extracts an overwhelming sense of menace.

When Walker steps out of the shower—which is as important here, in its way, as a symbol of vulnerability as it is in *Psycho*—Sondra is gone. Nor does she show up for breakfast (Walker having placed a red rose on her pillow). Nobody in the lobby has seen her. The early-morning concierge, traced to a health club (its window frames and workout equipment all painted fire-engine red), informs Walker that Sondra left the hotel with a red-haired man. After a visit (inspired by similar scenes in *Topaz* and *Vertigo*?) to a flower shop across the street—whose proprietor tries to sell him a bouquet of red roses—Walker finds Sondra's bracelet in a nearby alley; a drunk claims to have seen her forced into a car by some men.

What we have here, then, is one of Hitchcock's favorite motifs, which he made use of in *The Lady Vanishes*, *Vertigo*, and a number of other films: the missing-person motif. Furthermore, since both the police and the American Embassy officers are reluctant to believe that Sondra has been kidnapped, Walker—like many a Hitchcock hero—begins the search for his missing person quite without assistance. Realizing that Sondra's disappearance might be related to the inadvertent suitcase switch, he jimmies open the mystery suitcase and finds, among other things, a matchbook (red-tipped matches) that leads him to a nightclub called the Blue Parrot (an *hommage*, to be sure, of a distinctly un-Hitchcockian sort—though the club's denizens are less reminiscent of the extras in *Casablanca* than of the circus freaks in Hitchcock's *Saboteur*), to the blood-spattered corpse of a lowlife named Dédé, and to an ally of sorts in the person of Michelle (Emmanuelle Seigner), a strikingly beautiful young punker and part-time transatlantic drug courier who worked for Dédé and belongs to the mystery suitcase. (Many of Hitchcock's heroines, incidentally, have names that begin with M: Madeleine in *Vertigo*, Marion in *Psycho*, Melanie in *The Birds*, Marnie in *Marnie*.) Walker learns that the men who kidnapped his wife are spies, that Dédé—and, in turn, Michelle—worked for them, and that a souvenir Statue of Liberty replica in Michelle's suitcase (an allusion to *Saboteur*, in which the title character falls to his death from Lady Liberty's torch) contains the top-secret "Kryton," a gizmo of American manufacture used for "triggering the detonation of nuclear devices."

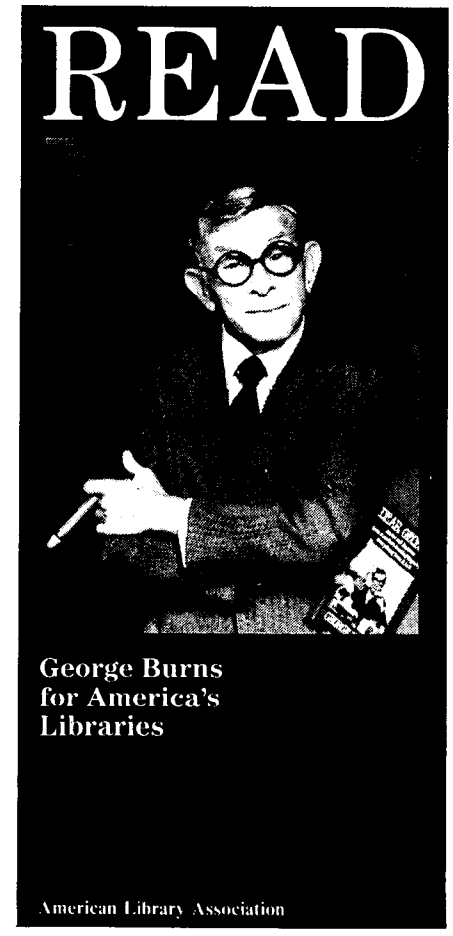
Like several Hitchcock heroes, in short, Walker soon finds himself to be (a) deeply involved, thanks to an accidental turn of events, in international espionage intrigue, (b) turning for companionship and support to a comely stranger whom he cannot *completely* trust, (c) moving around a lot, meeting odd characters, getting the lay of the land, and (d) wrangling over a MacGuffin. No, not a McMuffin, a MacGuffin—a word Hitchcock used to refer to the contrivances, at once all-important and utterly insignificant, upon which many of his plots were built: the uranium hidden in the wine bottles in *Notorious*, the secret formula in *The Thirty-Nine Steps*, the clause of the peace treaty in *Foreign Correspondent*. The "Kryton" is a classic Hitchcock-style MacGuffin.

Walker also finds himself in circumstances of increasing disorder and slovenliness. The film begins at dawn, and ends at about the same time two days later; with each morning Walker looks more disheveled; every time he shows up at the hotel he looks a bit less respectable, and cares less about it. Though the plot unfolds in conventional fashion, Polanski infuses it with surprising wit and urgency; every scene brings yet another extremely provocative touch. For instance—as my references to the film's periodic bursts of red may have suggested—he manages to achieve a good deal of shock value, in this mostly muted-gray movie, by offering an occasional splash of bright color: a green garbage truck, Michelle's yellow Volkswagen (to which, peculiarly enough, she seems to have the keys, though a key ring in the suitcase containing her only apartment key also contained a VW key), a sexy red dress which Michelle wears in the last few sequences of the film (at last clearly spelling out her *Doppelgänger* relationship to Sondra, who might well have been this young and beautiful when she and Walker honeymooned in Paris twenty years ago).

Frantic is full of subtle motifs: animals (the dog in the replacement taxi, Dédé's friendly cat, the drug-sniffing German shepherds at the airport, the pigeons engaging in intercourse outside Michelle's skylight), whose appearance often signals danger; telephones; money, which Michelle covets so eagerly and which Walker hands out with such abandon and in such abundance—to a bellhop, to the concierge (who refuses it), to Michelle (who finally gives it back), to several bartenders and waiters and cab drivers, to a coke dealer, to an airport parking-lot attendant—that the film represents, among many other things, a moral commentary on the whole business of getting and spending. There is also an abundance of keys—suitcase keys, hotel-room keys, the keys to Michelle's flat; there are even pairs of crossed keys on the lapels of the concierge's jacket—an image reminiscent of the crossed tennis rackets on Farley Granger's cigarette lighter in *Strangers on a Train*. Just as the crossed tennis rackets, in that film, symbolize the exchange of murders that Robert Walker proposes (might the name Richard Walker, in fact, be based on the name of that actor?), so the crossed keys on the concierge's jacket represent the mistakenly exchanged suitcases that set in motion the plot of *Frantic*.

Some of the Hitchcock echoes are amusingly familiar. For instance, like many of Hitchcock's movies—*Vertigo*, *North by Northwest*, *Saboteur*, and *Rear Window*, among others—*Frantic* contains a scene that plays with our fear of heights (the scene, in which Walker climbs over Michelle's slippery roof with her big, clumsy suitcase in hand, is particularly reminiscent of the clinging-to-a-rooftop climax of *To Catch a Thief*). Polanski makes witty, Hitchcockian use of music, too: to name just one example, when Walker phones the embassy toward the end of the film, he is put on hold and is forced to listen to a Muzak version of the theme from *Moulin Rouge*, a.k.a. "Where is Your Heart?" As our memory of his love for his wife grows dimmer (and as Michelle and her outfits grow sultrier), this is indeed one of the questions uppermost in our minds: where is Walker's heart? That he never explicitly betrays a weakness for Michelle's extraordinary feminine charms—the furthest he will go is to say "You look nice" when she puts on her red dress—doesn't keep us from positing a romantic interest; it only increases the ambiguity, hikes up the tension level. Finally, like *Vertigo* (which is set in the Walkers' home town), *Frantic* ends on an embankment beneath a bridge—not at the Golden Gate, of course, but at the Seine, with all the landmarks of Paris in plain sight. This placement of chaos amid familiar symbols of civilization and order—the British Museum in *Blackmail*, Westminster Abbey in *Foreign Correspondent*, the Albert Hall in *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, the Statue of Liberty in *Saboteur*, the United Nations and Mount Rushmore in *North by Northwest*—is a vintage Hitchcock device, and Polanski makes very effective use of it.

What, for all these Hitchcockian borrowings, makes Polanski's vision distinct from Hitchcock's? Part of the answer is that there's a dark, genuinely disturbing quality here—a rather Conradian darkness (not so inappropriate, come to think of it, since Polanski, like Conrad, is a Pole-turned-Westerner) which is alien to Hitchcock; at movie's end Walker tussles with a man bearing a long knife, and all the Hitchcock allusions fly out the window, and the only thing we can remember is Jack Nicholson's nose getting sliced in *Chinatown*. What's more, several times in this movie one is made to recall the slaying of Polanski's wife Sharon Tate, and certainly one feels that at least something of Walker's reaction to Sondra's abduction must be derived from Polanski's memory of his own horror at Miss Tate's savage murder. (Significantly, the first names of the husband and wife in this film begin with the same letters—R. and S.—as do the first names of Polanski and Miss Tate.) This, at least, might help to explain why, for all its borrowings from the Hitchcock *oeuvre*, *Frantic* feels so real—so sincerely, strangely, and painfully felt—so much of the time. It seems, one might say, a *personal* film in a way that none of Hitchcock's films were; indeed, perhaps part of the reason for Polanski's elaborate use of borrowed Hitchcockian motifs and images was that, in making a movie that taps such profound wells of private grief, he felt an unusually strong need for an external principle of order. Whatever the case, *Frantic* is ultimately a doubly successful film—at once a dazzling entertainment and a disquieting work of art. □



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BOOK REVIEWS

THE NORTON BOOK OF TRAVEL
Edited by Paul Fussell/W. W. Norton/$19.95

Algis Valiunas

If Pascal was right and all human unhappiness stems from the inability of men to sit quietly in their own rooms, then the prince of misfortune, heir to all known miseries and doubtless to some still undiscovered, must be the born traveler, who might be unsure just where on the face of the earth he really wants to be but who knows it isn't at home. To such a man, his own room is precisely what a steel crate bound with chains and dumped in the river was to Houdini: something to be gotten out of in a hurry, before he suffocates. Once out, if he's of the lucky sort, he'll find air enough anywhere else; if he's not so lucky, he'll have to do some groping around and gasping for breath before he finds the peculiar atmosphere that he can drink in easily, joyously. "A double necessity then: to get on the move, and to know whither," D. H. Lawrence declared, perennially footloose but always on the lookout for some place worth staying.

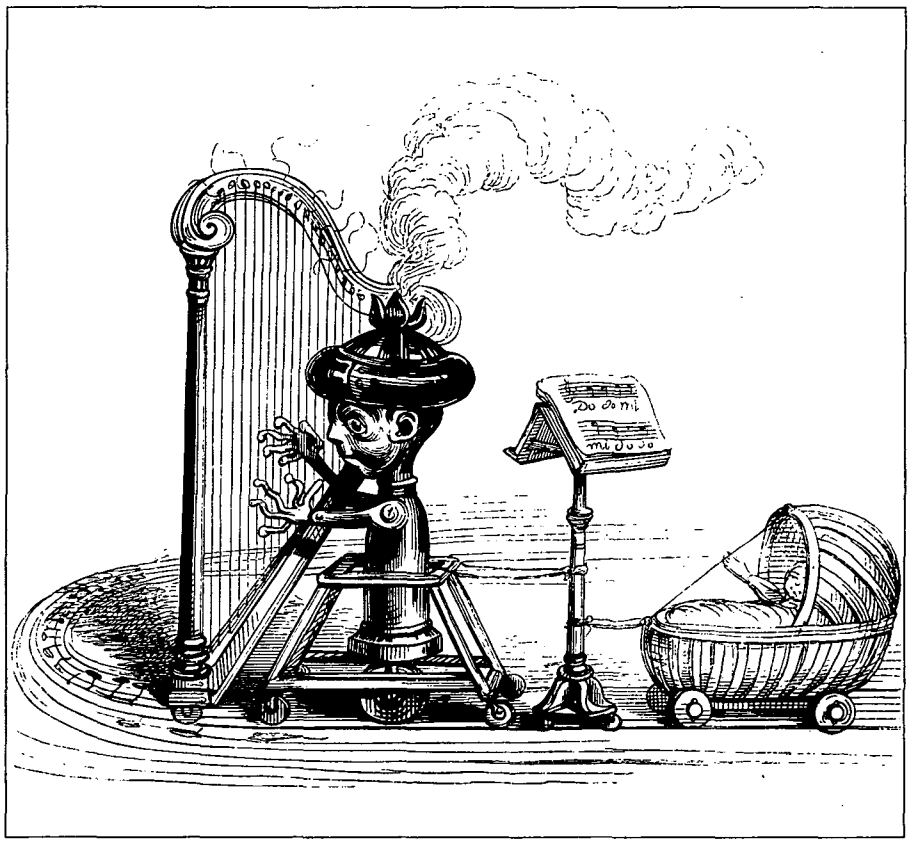
Pascal notwithstanding, the traveler who finds the place he's been searching for usually fills the air with shouts of pure jubilation. Having lighted on the right whither—though right only for the time being—Lawrence let loose a whooping hallelujah as he shipped out for Sardinia: "Ah, God, liberty, liberty, elemental liberty." Henry James, for whom neither the sea nor Sardinia would have done at all, gave equally impassioned and scarcely less demonstrative thanks for his first visit to the civilized glories of the Italian mainland: "At last—for the first time—I live!" And even Truman Capote, emotionally wizened at the age of twenty-four, felt his weariness lift and the enchantment of living touch him as he listened to a young man strum a harp in a castle garden on the shore of the Lago de Garda: "It was right that I had gone to Europe, if only because I could look again with wonder." (Europe felt the same, no doubt, having him there.)

Full of the wonder of being out and about in the world, *The Norton Book of Travel*, a fascinating anthology of travel writing from Herodotus to Paul Theroux, issues a provocative challenge to Pascal and the other great advocates of the contemplative life, whether philosophical or religious, who hold that human happiness is to be found strictly in meditative stillness. For Pascal, even the mustiest corner of the world is radiant with the divine presence, and as much of it as a man could ever require for his happiness; so why should anyone want to go anywhere else at all, when he need only look about him, and within himself, to know the full glory of being? Wanderlust is a symptom of spiritual deficiency. A man who demands exotic sensations to animate his sense of wonder does not really know where he is, for the near at hand, however plain and familiar, deserves reverent attention, and repays it by disclosing life's greatest marvels: those in one's own soul.

Pascal is right to a significant degree. There is wonder and there is wonder. The wonder that Truman Capote felt in knowing he wasn't in Louisiana anymore, or for that matter Manhattan, is of a comparatively paltry sort; a serious man would consider it to be merely the dim pleasure of diversion. Even the more worthy ecstasies of James and Lawrence had a certain peevish weakness behind them: to be capable of happiness only in this place or that one, sufficiently civilized or sufficiently uncivilized for one's taste, is to admit oneself to be lacking just as surely as the sorry hometown one has fled. A richer mind, a more robust soul, would feel at home wherever it happened to be set down, and would be capable of assuring its own happiness in Nottingham or even Cambridge, Massachusetts. Held to the strictest standards of human wisdom, the traveler might seem to be just another forlorn subspecies of unaccommodated man.

Held to less daunting standards, however—say, those to which one customarily holds artists rather than philosophers or mystics—many of these travelers are spiritual paragons, doing superbly and with joy the thing they were clearly made to do. The sterling quality of intelligence and of sentiment in *The Norton Book of Travel*, on the part not only of writers obviously at home in the world but also of some hanging by their fingertips from the narrowest cracks in a spiritual cliff-face, demonstrates that travel, too, can be an exalted calling. Marco Polo's words on his return from the Orient eloquently assert the glory of the vocation: "I believe it was God's pleasure that we should get back in order that people might learn about the things that the world contains." Some men are fortunate enough to comprehend what the world is made of—or to think they do—without leaving their rooms, while others must acquire their understanding on the move, taking within themselves the hammering life of the great cities and the stunning inhumanity of wilderness; looking into the ways of strange men in order to see their own rightly; inquiring after others' gods in the hope of learning how best to worship the true One. For the finest travel writers, some driven to absorb as much of the world as they can hold, others looking for the singular place where they'll find the one thing needful, whatever that might be, travel is an "impulse . . . so imperious that it amounts to a spiritual necessity," as Robert Byron put it, six hundred years after Marco Polo.

The selections in *The Norton Book of Travel*—from the work of some fifty writers, including poetry, fiction, history, and letters, as well as travel writing strictly construed—abundantly illustrate the world's variety, both in the things that exist to be known and told of and in the sorts of men who set out to know and tell of them. Herodotus conducts an investigation into Egyptian and Phoenician religious beliefs in order better to illuminate those of the Greeks—an austerely reasonable undertaking, subtly subversive of conventional piety. Bernal Diaz watches Montezuma eat tortillas. Pedro Vas de Caminha does seminal field work in physical anthropology, comparing the pudenda of native Brazilian women with their Portuguese counterparts. James Boswell admiringly describes a Corsican revolutionary hero, steeped in Rousseau and Marcus Aurelius, who discourses splendidly on martial virtue, honor, and love of country. Samuel Johnson, of all people, is awestruck by a landscape in the Scottish Highlands patently inimical to the human presence, and he insists that a man who has not been in such a place, who has not felt the power of its desolation, cannot truly reckon his own place in the world.



Algis Valiunas is a writer living in Chicago.

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Tobias Smollett catalogues exhaustively the assorted human refuse—gougers, chiselers, fleecers, bamboozlers, pimps, whores, cutthroats, and syphilitic opera singers—that chokes the path of any man unfortunate enough to venture upon the traveling life, especially in France. Alexander Kinglake, disregarding all warnings, enters Cairo in time of plague, and he registers the spectacle of mass death with senses rendered exquisitely acute by danger. Charles Dickens, treading warily in Washington, D.C., for everyone there chews tobacco and no one is very particular about where he spits, pronounces America to be the land of great expectorations. Mark Twain sneaks off a cruise ship under quarantine and leads a midnight raiding party against the Parthenon. Robert Louis Stevenson details the perils of travel by donkey. Henry James, as the Roman Carnival roars all around him, happens upon a young priest praying alone in a little church, and his reflections on the sight tremble between distaste for the chilling grimness of Christianity and tender regard for the unassailable purity of the priest's devotion. William Carlos Williams discovers an exhilarating and decidedly pagan beauty in one of the great Florentine churches. Evelyn Waugh gets stuck in a fetid little jungle outpost in British Guiana for an awfully long time; and who could deserve it more? V. S. Naipaul runs into diabolical bureaucratic difficulty getting a couple bottles of liquor past Indian customs, and discerns therein the subcontinent's irredeemable moral ruin, not without justice.

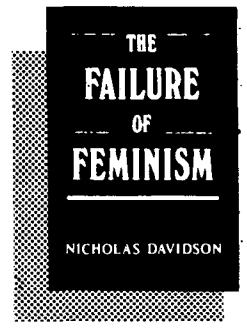
Even as *The Norton Book of Travel* celebrates the world's sunlit vastness and honors the daring men who've explored it, Paul Fussell, the anthology's editor, nevertheless cautions that the world is not what it used to be and that nowadays one might be advised to stay home and read. Travel worthy of the name is virtually extinct, Mr. Fussell laments; there is really only tourism now, which "requires that you see conventional things, and that you see them in a conventional way." It's too easy to get most anywhere you want to go; everyone else has been where you've been and is going where you're going; and anyplace you go is getting to look increasingly like every other place—which is to say, more and more like home. "I wished I had lived in the days of *real* journeys," writes the anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss, "when it was still possible to see the full splendour of a spectacle that had not yet been blighted, polluted, and spoilt . . . "

Blight and spoilage there are in abundance, of course, yet they have not done in the world's splendor quite yet, nor put an end to real journeying. There remain places hard to get at and perhaps harder to get out of, where you are unlikely to find a McDonald's or bump into anyone you know: you can still take a dog-sled to the North Pole, or search for living dinosaurs in the swamps of central Africa, or dress yourself as an Afghan tribesman and accompany the *mujahedeen* into combat. Although all these things have been done recently, they probably could bear repeating. For that matter, and more important, most of the things that just about any tourist has done by now can still be done as though for the first time. The Mona Lisa and the Great Pyramid, the Matterhorn and the Pacific at Big Sur: all the world still remains to be known anew; it is within the traveler's power to wipe the greasy thumbprint from the postcard views. To see things clearly and with wonder when you are a tourist is not easy, but it is no more difficult than to do so when you are at home in your room. No matter who has been there ahead of you, the world retains its primordial capacity to inspire wonder; what is most wanting in our sad time is the human capacity to be inspired.

Whatever the misgivings that the editor and some of his chosen writers have about modern travel, the preponderant effect of this book is to strengthen the reader's eagerness to have at the world. This estimable anthology might even have been an invaluable one had Mr. Fussell left out such lesser items as Karl Phillip Moritz in England, Truman Capote in Ischia, Cyril Connolly hither and yon, and instead put in Goethe and Stendhal in Italy, Dostoevsky and Herzen in Paris or London, Gide in the Congo. Yet despite the omission of some of the greatest travel writers, *The Norton Book of Travel* convincingly makes the case for the seriousness and significance of travel writing—a genre often regarded as possessing, on its better days, perhaps the wit but something less than the profundity of good light verse. Mr. Fussell considers travel to be "one of the liberal arts," and his anthology shows the traveler again and again as a man bent on searching the world for knowledge he must have, either for the incomparable pleasure that knowing brings, or in order to determine more precisely the terms according to which he ought to live, or in quest of the sacred ground where he can live freely in the way he already knows to be right.

Walt Whitman's "Song of the Open Road" exuberantly sets procedural guidelines for the traveler's inquiry: "Now I re-examine philosophies and religions,/They may prove well in lecture-rooms, yet not prove at all under the spacious clouds and along the landscape and flowing currents." The very best writings in this collection, and most notably those by Johnson, Kinglake, and James, record with art's main force the tests to which these "traveling souls," in Whitman's phrase, submitted their deepest speculations, along the landscape and amid the tumultuous cities. Perfect stillness—that of a man who has all he needs inside himself—might be the highest form of human reverence and the source of the surest happiness; however, there is a kind of passionate restlessness, perpetual motion propelled by true wonder, that is nearly as sublime, and sometimes nearly as joyous. □

The Failure of Feminism
by Nicholas Davidson



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AGNES SMEDLEY: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF AN AMERICAN RADICAL

Janice R. and Stephen R. MacKinnon
University of California Press/$25

Harvey Klehr

Early in 1949 the United States Army released a report about the activities of a Soviet spy apparatus in China and Japan during the 1930s and early 1940s, written by Major-General Charles Willoughby, General MacArthur's chief of intelligence. Headed by Richard Sorge, a German Communist posing as a Nazi journalist, the ring had penetrated the top echelons of the Japanese government before Sorge's capture and execution. Willoughby's report accused Agnes Smedley, a well-known American journalist and a long-time supporter of the Chinese Communists, of being a spy and a key link in the Sorge network. Smedley denied the charges and threatened to sue for libel. Within a week, admitting it had no evidence, the Army retracted the charges and apologized to Smedley.

Interest in the Sorge apparatus has recently been rekindled by the British journalist Chapman Pincher, who charges that Roger Hollis, for nine years the head of the British Security Service, was a Soviet mole. But Pincher's allegation that Agnes Smedley and her circle of Communist friends recruited Hollis during his sojourn in Shanghai in the 1930s is based largely on speculation and hearsay. The new biography of Smedley by Janice and Stephen MacKinnon, on the other hand, indignantly denies not only that Smedley ever spied for the Soviet Union, but less convincingly, that she ever worked for the Communist International. Determined to exonerate her, the MacKinnons refuse to believe that anyone so independent and irascible as Smedley could ever have been a Comintern agent. One of the book's many virtues, however, is that the authors' exhaustive research turned up enough clues to suggest that while Smedley was not a conventional spy, ferreting out military or industrial secrets, she probably did assist a Soviet spy ring in a variety of ways.

Agnes Smedley's identification with the oppressed and disadvantaged came from experience, not the theoretical tracts that inspired so many middle-class radicals. Born in 1892 into poverty in rural Missouri, she suffered through a harsh childhood. Her hard-drinking father barely supported the family. Years of poverty in Colorado mining camps aged and killed her mother. An aunt was a prostitute. Agnes managed just one year of college before financial woes forced her to drop out. While at Tempe Normal School in Arizona, however, she met Ernest Brundin, an intense young Socialist whom she soon married (and soon after divorced).

In 1917 while working for a newspaper in Fresno, California, the center of a thriving community of Sikh farmers, Smedley was drawn into the struggle to overthrow British rule in India. After losing a teaching job because of her membership in the American Socialist party, she set out for New York, where she soon was actively involved with Indian revolutionaries. In March 1918 she was arrested by federal authorities and indicted under the Espionage Act, accused of attempting to incite rebellion against the Raj. An additional charge against her was disseminating birth control information.

Although she was never prosecuted, Smedley became a prominent figure in the left-wing world as a result of her arrest. Margaret Sanger put her in control of Sanger's journal on birth-control. Smedley preferred, however, to move to Berlin, where she continued to work for Indian independence with her common-law husband, Virendranath Chattopadhyaya, a leading Indian nationalist. For the next several years they were engrossed in the often fractious world of Indian exiles. Smedley's autobiographical novel *Daughter of the Earth*, published in 1929, solidified her reputation as a militant feminist and radical.

Smedley's feminism was fed by her bitter experiences with men and her own ambivalent attitudes about sex. She and Brundin did not consummate their marriage for eight months. During their brief marriage she underwent two abortions, fearing that a child would interfere with her goal of becoming a journalist. Just before her arrest in New York, an Indian nationalist had raped her, prompting a failed suicide attempt. He continued to spread rumors about her sexual behavior for years, sparking a nervous breakdown in 1922. Chattopadhyaya, ashamed of her reputation and lower-class background, mistreated her. When she went to Moscow in the early 1920s, the Indian Communist M.N. Roy disparaged her political faction by labeling Smedley a British spy and an "evil temptress." The German psychoanalyst from whom she sought help tried to seduce her.

Scornful of convention and aggressively promiscuous, Smedley believed that "love is nothing but sex in action." As the authors put it: "Breaking up marriages became a cause for the rest of her life." In one letter to Margaret Sanger, she advocated using sex as a weapon, calling for "a complete birth strike."

Revolutionaries of the time were no more sympathetic to such views than conventional bourgeois men. When living in Yenan in 1937, Smedley infuriated Communist women with her advocacy of sexual liberation. She organized dances that sparked anger among women cadres. One night Mao Tse-tung's wife stormed into the apartment of Lily Wu, a close friend of Smedley's, and, discovering her husband, made an embarrassing public scene. The episode culminated with Mao asking the Central Committee to allow him to obtain a divorce.

By the end of the 1920s Smedley's stormy relationship with Chattopadhyaya had ended. He joined the German Communist party and later disappeared in Stalin's purges. She turned her attention to China, where her initial interest was the Indian community. She traveled there via Russia in late 1928 with journalistic credentials from the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, hoping to build links between the Indian and Chinese nationalist movements. Her passion for work among the deeply factionalized Indians ended rather abruptly, however, after she discovered the severed head of a Sikh in her wastebasket. Her enthusiasm was then stirred by the discovery of a new and more exciting radical nationalist movement—the Chinese Communists.

For the next two decades Smedley's dispatches and articles from China engendered sympathy and support for the Communist cause, which she portrayed as savior of the nation. Although she befriended non-Communists as well, and sometimes mildly criticized Communist positions or advocated alliances with other forces, Smedley never wavered in her sympathy for the Party. Yet, despite working closely with Communists in Germany, India, and the United States, Smedley apparently never joined any of the Communist parties. She did apply for membership in the Chinese Communist party in 1937 but was turned down, possibly because of her inability to accept discipline or perhaps because she was more valuable as a sympathizer.

Aside from a brief trip to the United States and Russia in 1933-1934, Smedley remained in Asia until 1941. In China she managed to pop up at key moments. At the time of Chiang Kai-shek's kidnapping in 1936 by two of his generals, Smedley did daily radio broadcasts that cemented her reputation as a dangerous radical. She was one of a handful of foreigners present at the Chinese Communists' headquarters in Yenan in 1937. For eighteen months, from 1938 to 1940, she traveled with the Communist New Fourth Army as a war correspondent while it fought the Japanese.

Back in the United States in 1941, Smedley devoted herself to building support for the Chinese war effort. An advocate of Kuomintang-Communist cooperation, she worked with conservatives like Walter Judd and J. B. Powell, distanced herself from more open Communist spokesmen like Anna Louise Strong, and was mildly critical of the Soviet Union. The uneasy American consensus on China broke

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Harvey Klehr is the Samuel Candler Dobbs Professor of Politics at Emory University and author, most recently, of Far Left of Center: The American Radical Left Today, *published this month by Transaction Books.*

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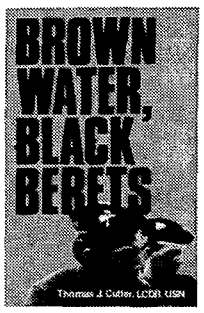

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apart, however, after the recall of General Joseph Stilwell, a bitter critic of Chiang. Smedley, increasingly identified with the Communists, became the object of harsh attacks by Chiang's American supporters. As the Chinese Communists advanced militarily at the end of the 1940s, the polemics heated up, culminating in the charges of the Willoughby report.

Increasingly isolated, in financial straits and with few friends, Smedley decided to return to China. A Chinese Communist emissary gave her $2000 for the trip, but in Great Britain, her first stop, a hemorrhaging ulcer sent her to the hospital. She died in 1950 after an unsuccessful operation. The following year her ashes were interred in Peking; she left her estate to Marshall Zhu De, whose biography she had been writing.

Smedley's activities in China remain a matter of deep dispute. Many of her closest friends there were Communists, and a number were Comintern agents or Soviet spies—Gerhart Eisler, Arthur Ewarts, and the spy chief Sorge himself, with whom she had a torrid love affair. The MacKinnons admit that Smedley must have known they were Comintern agents, but that she herself "was a freelance revolutionary operating on a global scale" who did not work for the Comintern because "a Comintern or CP member she was not" and unaffiliated radicals did not work for the Communist International.

The argument is not only circular but implausible. Although Smedley was not a formal member of a Communist party, she clearly regarded herself as a soldier in the same army. Moreover, the authors provide enough detail about Smedley's activities in the early 1930s to cast doubt on their own conclusions. She was deeply involved in several Comintern projects before 1934. Although Richard Sorge avoided contact with most other radicals in China, he got in touch with Smedley immediately after arriving in Shanghai. And "it was through Smedley that Sorge found most of the Asian contacts who gave him significant information" during the next few years, including Ozaki Hotsumi, who became his principal Japanese source. When the Soviets sent Otto Braun to China in the early 1930s to supervise Comintern policy, Smedley helped put him in touch with the Jiangxi soviet where Mao's forces had established a base.

There is also the curious story of Smedley's relationship with Earl Browder, who set up an important Comintern apparatus in Shanghai in the late 1920s. According to the authors, Browder, the future leader of the American Communist party, tried to recruit Smedley into the Party in New York in 1920. This encounter is highly unlikely, however; Browder was imprisoned in Leavenworth Penitentiary until November 1920 and did not become active in Party affairs until 1921, by which time Smedley was in Germany. Smedley did encounter him in Moscow in the early 1920s; in a letter to a friend she mocked his pretensions and behavior. The MacKinnons believe "it is doubtful that she would have seen much of him in Shanghai" when he was doing his Comintern work. Yet, later in their book, they note that in 1935 Smedley wrote several times to Browder appealing to him to send someone from America to edit a new pro-Communist journal being established in Shanghai. Browder responded by sending Grace Granich, his own secretary. It is likely that Smedley knew about Browder's "internationalist" work in China and had done what she could to advance it. Would she have written to Browder only on the basis of an unpleasant encounter in Moscow more than ten years earlier? And why would he dispatch his own secretary half-way around the world to aid an "unaffiliated" radical?

The MacKinnons sometimes write as though the Communist International were a philanthropic organization. They note that the League Against Imperialism was founded in 1927; "its initial financing was provided by the Comintern, which thereafter deliberately refrained from exercising direct control over the organization, so as to avoid tainting it as Moscow-dominated." The Comintern, however, was rarely so generous; it set up front groups to advance its interests. And it used Communists, pro-Communists, quasi-Communists, and fellow-travelers as the situation demanded. One of the League's functionaries, Louis Gibarti, identified by the MacKinnons as a "labor organizer," was one of the Comintern's most experienced operatives.

Comintern agents did not limit their activities to uncovering military secrets. Journalists with access to political information and gossip, contacts with scholars and intellectuals, and outlets to the public were valuable commodities for the Comintern. Smedley may not have been a conventional spy, but she clearly facilitated the work of a Comintern apparatus that later turned into a spy ring. The Soviet Union had no compunction about using dedicated revolutionaries to advance its own interests; many revolutionaries were more than willing to serve. If Smedley was disappointed by the course of the Russian Revolution, that did not prevent her from aiding Communists who duplicated its horrors. □

THE ORIGINS AND EVOLUTION OF THE ARAB-ZIONIST CONFLICT

Michael J. Cohen/University of California Press/$18.95

Micah Morrison

Michael J. Cohen has provided a balanced and mercifully brief corrective to ahistorical views of the Arab-Israeli dispute in his new book, *The Origins and Evolution of the Arab-Zionist Conflict*, a bare-bones account of how the bitch sisters of Arab nationalism and Zionism were born, grew, and struggled in the tumultuous first half of the twentieth century. He covers all the main points of the subject from 1914 to 1948, offering the book "as a guide for students of the Middle East and for the intelligent non-specialist."

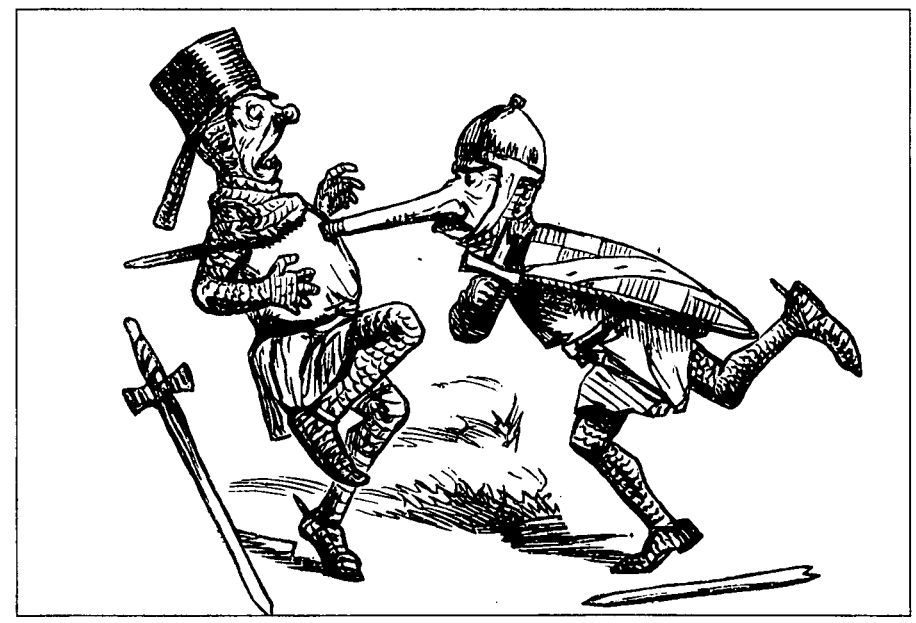
Brevity is the soul of the book. The author, a professor of history at Bar Ilan University in Israel, has examined much of the period at greater length in his other works, *Churchill and the Jews, Palestine and the Great Powers,* and *Palestine: Retreat from the Mandate.* In his latest work, the historian's necessary absorption with detail and color gives way to a need for compression. Partisan wranglers undoubtedly will charge him with over-simplification.

Cohen begins by sketching the intellectual and political atmosphere among Arabs and Jews prior to 1914. The playwright and journalist Theodor Herzl makes a pallid appearance in these pages—sad fate for such a vivid megalomaniac. He puts in motion the Zionist movement, and vanishes. Nascent pan-Arab nationalism surfaces in the form of the writer Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi, an opponent of Ottoman rule.

Ottoman power crumbled as the First World War swept over Europe and the Near East. Cohen examines the tangled web of ambiguous assurances and declarations the British passed on at this time to such key figures as the sharif Husayn of Mecca, leader of the Hashemite clan and great-grandfather of the current ruler of Jordan, and Zionist leader Chaim Weizmann. Next, Britain's problems administering the mandate, its attempts between 1920 and 1945 both to contain the growing conflict between Arabs and Jews and to find avenues of compromise, while attending to its imperial interests, are handled in under forty pages. The final section deals with the period from 1945 to 1948, when an exhausted England, pressed by war losses, a decolonizing mood at home, and escalating tensions in Palestine, finally detached itself from the area. The book is rounded off by selections from key diplomatic documents concerning various plans for the region and some suggestions for further reading.

Although the book is for the most part written in clear if somewhat pedestrian prose, the author misleads when he strives for too much simplicity. At one point he writes that "the

Micah Morrison, former Israel correspondent of The American Spectator, *is deputy director of the Committee for the Free World and editor of its monthly publication,* Contentions.



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British promotion of Zionism in Palestine" was one of the two major processes that "ignited" Palestine Arab nationalism. (The other process was the division of Ottoman Syria by France and Britain.) Citing the Balfour Declaration, England's "novel bureaucratic methods and the support it gave to the predominantly European Jewish influx," and British acquiescence in the Arab elite's land sales to the Zionists, Cohen cobbles together a theory that either should have been developed at length or cut. The idea is interesting but muddled. As he himself demonstrates elsewhere in the book, British policy was anything but consistent. It could hardly be said, for example, that the 1922 and 1939 "white papers" on the Jewish population of Palestine were geared to promoting Zionism.

One theme that emerges is a record of Arab disarray and the repeated betrayal of the Palestinians by their self-appointed leaders and elite families. Land sales are but one aspect of this. One hears the echo of the current Palestinian situation when reading of the first British high commissioner, Sir Herbert Samuel, and his many attempts in the early 1920s "to persuade the Palestinians to participate in the process of government. . . . Samuel put forward numerous proposals for granting self-rule to the Arabs, from advisory to legislative councils, to the idea of an Arab agency that would parallel the Jewish Agency constituted by the Zionist Organization. All were rejected by the Arab leadership. . . . "

Twenty-five years later, as the United Nations drew up a plan partitioning the area into Jewish and Arab states and the British pulled out, the Arabs were still rejecting compromise and planning to go to war against the Jews. A new period, rooted in the old conflicts, had begun. The Jews won their state. "For the Palestinian Arabs," Cohen concludes, "the disunity of the Arab world and, perhaps above all, lack of internal cohesion and a dearth of administrative or military skills brought disaster."

As the fortieth anniversary of Israeli statehood draws near, much of the commemorative reports, debates, and symposia will focus on Palestinian unrest and the Israeli hold over the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Cohen's book is a timely reminder that Israel's conflict with the Palestinians did not begin twenty-one years ago when Arab armies attacked from the now-occupied territories. He offers a concise sketch of the early acts of a complex historical drama that is still unfolding. For this reason alone the book should land on the desks of all those writers and television-news types who so often neglect to look to the past for an understanding of the present dilemma. □

MISSION TO CIVILIZE: THE FRENCH WAY
Mort Rosenblum/Harcourt Brace Jovanovich/$19.95

SQUANDERING EDEN: AFRICA AT THE EDGE
Mort Rosenblum and Doug Williamson
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich/$19.95

H. W. Crocker III

When the French built their empire in what is now the Third World, they did so not as a colonial power, but as a civilizing power. Mort Rosenblum was introduced to *la mission civilisatrice* by a French mercenary in the Congo who showed him how to open a wine bottle without a corkscrew, and youngsters in Francophone Africa are still receiving the benefits of French civilization when they go to a newsstand and "browse among the rack of Astérix comic books, reading about their ancestors the Gauls." As de Gaulle himself once said: "It is a great responsibility to be France, the humanizing power *par excellence.*"

In *Mission to Civilize: The French Way,* Mort Rosenblum—a senior correspondent for the Associated Press who has been everywhere in the French-speaking world—provides a broad and amusing sweep of French history in an attempt to figure out how it is that having "killed hundreds of thousands in colonial wars, France is a Third World symbol of liberty, equality, and brotherhood." Rosenblum posits that the French genius that made this possible is the French belief that one "can assume any pose, and command any priority, if it is done with conviction and flair."

Conviction and flair, of course, were not enough to keep Indochina and Algeria in the Empire or to prevent the war in Vietnam from claiming whole graduating classes of St. Cyr or the war in Algeria from being waged with shocking ferocity. But it might explain why, in 1978, there were six times as many Frenchmen in the Ivory Coast as there had been at independence, and five times as many in Gabon. What's more, Gabon wants all the Frenchmen it can get.

The French, in this regard, have been much more successful than the stodgy, old inhabitants of Albion, who, though perfidious, lack the French facility for stubbornly pursuing one's national interest under a cloak of dramatic, but benign, hypocrisy. As Rosenblum points out, when France gave its African colonies independence, the process went something like this: "At each new government headquarters, a door was labeled *Ministre des Finances,* and an African moved in. The office's former French occupant shifted to a smaller, adjoining room behind his own sign *Conseiller Technique.* And so on in virtually every important department, including the armed forces and secret police."

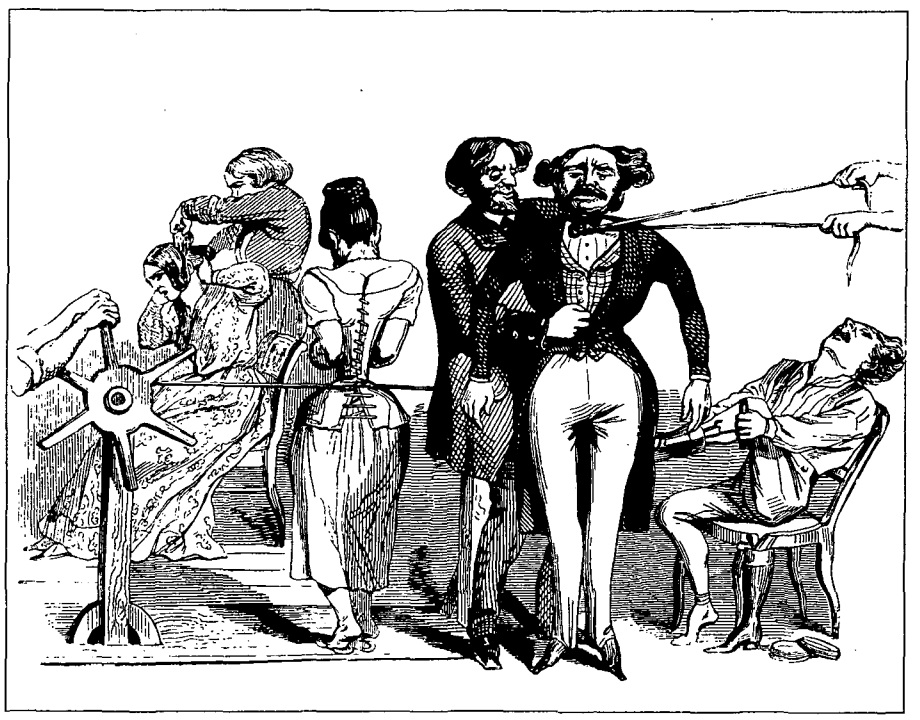
Affiliation with France brings many benefits. In Guadeloupe, there are more cars per capita than in the home country. Supermarkets in French Africa carry a variety of Camemberts, *foie gras,* and bottled water from the *métropole.* And throughout Africa, countries want to join the French club. Zaire, a former Belgian colony, was allowed in and has enjoyed one of the more important benefits of membership—the protection of the French army.

All of this can be expensive for France. President Mitterrand even went so far as to say that the "colonial era is over, and I will not bring it back even to help you out." But Mitterrand also sent troops to Chad, and it seems unlikely that the French will willingly renounce their right to maintain their imperial prestige—if not their empire proper. As Louis de Guiringaud, a former foreign minister, puts it: "Africa is the only continent which is still the right size for France, still within the limits of its means. It is the only one where France can still, with 500 men, change the course of history." And history, needless to say, is what France is all about. Indeed, according to de Gaulle, France *is* history: "Any large-scale human edifice will be arbitrary and ephemeral if the seal of France is not affixed to it." Some people might not believe that. Those people are not French.

French literature begins with the Crusaders's chronicles. Since then, and probably before then, the French have been noted for their chauvinism. After *l'affaire Greenpeace*—the bombing of the *Rainbow Warrior*—Charles Hernu, France's defense minister, "who is supposed to have lied about the bombing to his old friend, the president, did not go to jail. Instead, he received the loudest and longest applause of anyone at the Socialist Party congress shortly afterwards. He outpolled everyone in his district for the National Assembly in March 1986, and was mentioned as a presidential candidate for 1988." The French, unlike most other Western nations, believe fervently in the idea of pursuing national greatness. France's independent nuclear deterrent, her continued overseas deployment of *La Légion Etrangère,* her lack of any anti-nuclear agitation, and her expanding efforts to move ahead in high technology are all signs of this. French chauvinism is its constant force.

Chauvinism, however, has bad connotations. And many people have bad feelings about the French. Like Machiavelli, they believe that since "the time of Caesar, the French have hardly evolved: changeable and lightweight, weak in adversity, insolent in good fortune; you cannot count on them. They keep their promises poorly and their own interests always predominate."

H. W. Crocker III is a writer and editor in Washington, D. C.



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Machiavelli would seem to have a point.

And not even over a glass of wonderful *beaujolais* can one fully agree with the young French administrator who is quoted by Rosenblum as musing: "We could cut away Martinique with little loss. It has no strategic importance anymore. We certainly make no money from it. But France does not exist but for its culture and history. There is a certain naiveté, a certain feeling that we can bring something of importance to people. Our presence in the Antilles is an expression of that. We are here for affection. How could a German, say, understand that sort of thing." How indeed? Or even an Italian? Or even an Anglo-Saxon who believes that the French are there more out of pride than affection?

Mission to Civilize is an informative and entertaining book. Well-written, save for the occasional cutesy, journalistic colloquialism, and well-balanced, Mort Rosenblum's book offers an admirable elucidation of the French imperial psyche that we would do well to examine carefully.

Squandering Eden: Africa at the Edge, co-written by Rosenblum and Doug Williamson, a liberal South African lawyer turned environmental scientist, is also worth examining, though perhaps not carefully. It is not an ideological book—though two of P. T. Bauer's books are listed in the bibliography and many of his lessons seem to have been absorbed by the authors—but it is rather a commonsensical, anecdotal critique of the environmental, political, and economical disaster area that Africa is becoming. The authors point out that Africa's combined gross domestic product is less than that of Italy, that the purchasing power of most Africans has been in decline for at least the last ten years, and that all the economic aid that has poured into Africa through the United Nations and other sources has often done more harm than good.

They do not let the Africans off lightly. The authors quote one American diplomat who says angrily that "there are more people in Peoria concerned about starving Sudanese than there are in Khartoum." They also score the hypocrisy of African leaders who "demand drastic redistribution of global resources but do not share wealth within their own national systems." And they come up with an intriguing way of dealing with the foreign debt of certain African countries: "For all the hand-wringing about Zaire's debt, no one seems to have thought of asking Mobuto to write a personal check."

But the real and most disturbing point of *Squandering Eden* is the ecological damage that is being inflicted on the continent—damage of overwhelming importance that is all too easily overlooked given all of Africa's other sundry problems.

When the Portuguese explored Madagascar, for example, they found a "naturalists' promised land" that was covered entirely by hardwood forests. Today, it is among the most eroded places on earth. Rosenblum and Williamson write:

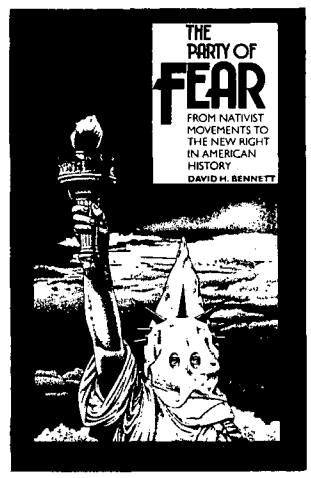
> Four-fifths of Madagascar is barren, burned off by subsistence farmers or herders. Late in 1985, attending a conservation meeting, Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh and president of the World Wildlife Fund, watched a farmer burn towering baobab trees to clear a cornfield. He told one leader, "Your country is committing suicide." He was not exaggerating. Scientists who know the island well worry that little will remain by the turn of the century.

When Williamson rhapsodizes about the bush—"The richness of plant and animal life, the purity of places unspoiled by man, the pungent smells, and the solitude exude an atmosphere of uneasy tranquility. There is always the promise of beauty and danger"—we can see precisely what it is that we are in danger of losing. "From the air, the diminishing herds of wildebeest on the African plain look exactly like one might imagine the last of America's buffalo stampeding off to the edge of extinction. The buffalo, at least, gave way to the world's most productive agricultural system. Behind the disappearing wildebeest, there is a desolate, barren sand."

The authors are very good at laying out Africa's troubles and their ideas about how to meet them—such as making use of local talent and insight and not squandering what remains of Africa's resources—are fine as far as they go. The problem is that one sees little hope these ideas will be picked up and exploited with sufficient vigor to stem the tide of disaster. There *are* practical and worthy solutions to the difficulties confronting Africa, and many intelligent people have propounded them. But, as in so many other situations, there seem to be insuperable barriers—chiefly bureaucratic ones—to putting these ideas into service. As Jacques Cousteau testified to a skeptical Rosenblum: "Individually, men have the wisdom to save Africa. Unfortunately, when men get together in a society, they act with more stupidity than dinosaurs."

For the sake of the Africans, the wildebeest, and, as Peregrine Worsthorne might well add, the British, it might be time to circumvent the African and international bureaucracies and bring back that old imperial rag. □

THE PARTY OF FEAR
From Nativist Movements to the New Right in American History
by David H. Bennett



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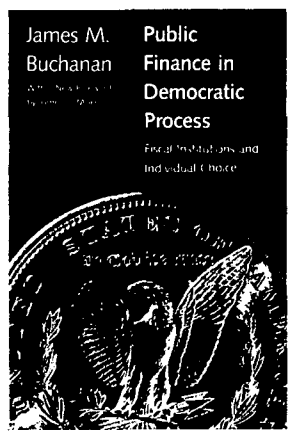

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ARTS AND SCIENCES: A SEVENTIES SEDUCTION

Thomas Mallon/Ticknor & Fields-Houghton Mifflin/$16.95

John R. Dunlap

Several years ago—in fact, the very year (1973) in which the plot of Thomas Mallon's first novel begins to unfold—Tom Wolfe wrote an essay on "The New Journalism," wherein occurs a passing retrospective on Wolfe's five years in graduate school. Wolfe, doubtful of his ability to convey "the remotest idea" of the horrifying experience and groping through half a long paragraph for an appropriate metaphor, finally likens graduate school to "being locked inside a Seaboard Railroad roomette, sixteen miles from Gainesville, Florida, heading north on the Miami-to-New York run, with no water and the radiator turning red in an amok psychotic overboil, and George McGovern sitting beside you and telling you his philosophy of government."

Just so. But in the same paragraph Wolfe denies the possibility of what half the students he met in graduate school swore they would do: write a novel about it. No way—the topic "defied literary exploitation." Such a novel couldn't happen; it would have to be a study "of frustration so exquisite, so ineffable, nobody could describe it."

Well, scratch *that* literary judgment. With *Arts and Sciences* Thomas Mallon has described to a tee the indescribable, demonstrating that he is a can-do, take-charge kind of guy, despite a close biographical and physical resemblance between himself and the central character, Arthur V. Dunne. Artie is a neurasthenic twit who—short, bespectacled, and weighing all of 113 pounds—comes off as a cross between Woody Allen and Freddie Bartholomew.

Actually, Artie's a pretty neat kid. The trouble is, at age 21 and into the first month of his first semester at the Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Artie still is . . . well, a kid. You see, he has entered a graduate English program for an awfully naive reason: he truly loves literature. I mean, he reads books because he *wants* to! He is therefore alone and lonely in Comus Hall, a graduate residence populated by borderline psychopaths of the sort one with greater academic experience than Artie's would naturally expect to find in such quarters—including, for example, the inevitable lifer M.S. candidate who, in 1973, still plugs away at a dissertation begun during the Truman Administration.

Then there's graduate school itself, gray and desiccated and not too damn friendly, a place where it is "impolitic" not to attend certain parties and where departmental politics are "a substitute for sex and family." Amid such chilly circumstances, and still just a kid (a nice Catholic boy, by the way—if not precisely Catholic in orthodox detail, at least residually Catholic in the appurtenances of whispered Hail Marys, a simple decency, and a prodigiously nagging conscience), Artie begins to feel himself coming unhinged.

The lodestar of Artie's budding climacteric, so to speak (what the hell, it's a novel about life in graduate school, a place where people talk funny) is a fellow graduate student named Angela Downing. She is a beautiful Briton, with cornsilk hair and long legs and freckles. She is also totally self-possessed and brilliant: Artie knows of her brilliance "from hearing her speak in the seminar in seventeenth-century poetry they were both in. Why couldn't he be more like her? So percipient, so unvexed, so tall."

About a head taller than Artie, in fact, and seven years older. Angela has come to Harvard from England to relieve the boredom she feels after the collapse of her marriage "to a gas pump" (she means "oil executive"—Angela has a way with words), and she catches Artie's admiring gaze during a particularly excruciating session of their English Symposium. The topic is Alexander Pope; Artie, who cut his literary teeth on Keats, has little patience with Pope's "neo-classical fortune cookies" served up in "those awful ten-syllable corsets." He is struggling to keep such thoughts to himself when a note penned by Angela arrives from across the room:

> Of the twelve men who this stuffy
> room fill,
> Two I'd like to screw, three I'd like
> to kill.

Artie turns crimson, and looks up to see Angela lazily smiling at him.

Within a few weeks they are frequently sharing Angela's "forty-nine feet square" bed in Angela's posh apartment (she's rich too, this nerd's dream-girl), after cutting a deal to share the burden of the reading list for the spring M.A. exams. But Artie's new-found sexual prowess doesn't help much with the "disaster demons" now inside him—those intermittent, barely controllable urges he feels to wreak petty destruction on his surroundings: *Suppose I just ripped up that Herbert manuscipt . . .*

At the student clinic, he has taken the story of his demons to Mrs. Crangel, a fortyish counseling psychologist "comfortable inside her own skin" and gifted with an ironic sense of the inexactness of her science. Mrs. Crangel speculates that Artie's nightmare demons "are really just little substitutes for big questions, real ones, that you're afraid to ask." By the time he starts jumping into the sack with Angela, Artie is visiting Mrs. Crangel at the clinic regularly, and we get our first hint of what's really going on between Artie and Angela when Angela, out of character, betrays a touch of jealousy about this other woman in whom Artie confides.

A second hint comes later, when the normally unvexed Angela gives into a brief fit of genuine rage. The thought has already occurred to Artie (months before, at about Thanksgiving time) that he knows Angela chiefly by her tastes. She hates American literature, loves medieval literature and American television, hates Harvard, loves pulling pranks on bloodless professors and their student toadies; but she has told Artie nothing of her history, so that Artie briefly wonders to himself whether Angela might be nothing more than "a collection of arbitrary tastes, all promulgated with stylish absolutism." Late in the second semester, however, when Angela suddenly asks Artie what sort of person he thinks she is and Artie responds that he has no idea, Angela shouts: "Well, why don't you make some fucking effort to find out!"

Now, Mrs. Crangel has already referred jauntily to Angela as a "bitch," an observation which makes Artie wince but has not clicked with him. Mrs. Crangel thus knows something Artie still has to learn: that female bitchiness is directly proportionate to male obtuseness. Artie is still too hung-up, too self-centered, too preoccupied with his books, and, for all his literary acumen, just too fundamentally stupid to respond to the hints. So Angela dumps him and takes up with another gas pump. Bewildered, Artie turns all his energy to a fierce bout of final preparation for the M.A. exams.

Arts and Sciences is neatly bracketed, fore and aft, with two appearances by another important character, Artie's best friend from his undergraduate years at Brown University, Joseph Abbott Manningham, Jr., who goes by the nickname Shane. Shane (remember the movie? the impeccably crafted 1953 George Stevens western, with Alan Ladd as the archetypal drifter and Brandon de Wilde as the 11-year-old boy who adores him?) is a druggie and a drifter, left over from the counterculture of the sixties and not much interested in the "yuppie stirrings" of the seventies. He loves old movies and hard work. Artie (Shane calls him "Urn Man") is in awe of Shane's worldly wisdom and seeks out Shane's advice whenever possible. "As for your own chick, this Downing job," Shane writes from California, "I don't know, Urn Man. She sounds like a potential dragon lady. I'd advise you to keep your little ceramic ass covered."

But after acing the M.A. exams, after nine months of unremitting anguish and toil, Artie feels a strange confidence that pulls him enough out of himself to see things anew—to see, for instance, the fear he had never noticed before in Shane's eyes, or the tender need behind Angela's imperious talent and superficial buoyancy. Artie, much less disposed now to cover his ass, may have another chance with Angela. And, as we leave him to enjoy his first glow of adult achievement, we are given to know that Artie's chances with Angela will depend very seriously on whether he will be man enough to love his Keats more than his professional success.

Which places something of a burden on Artie's creator as well. Thomas Mallon's first novel—tightly plotted, witty, good humored, full of good sentiment, utterly unsentimental—puts him in debt to his readers. He owes them a sequel. □

John R. Dunlap teaches English at Santa Clara University.

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BUDDY BOYS: WHEN GOOD COPS TURN BAD

Mike McAlary/G. P. Putnam's Sons/$18.95

David Brooks

On July 13, 1977, New York had its second major blackout and in ghettos across the city people interpreted the darkness as license to steal. Tony Magno, a cop in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn, had just completed a day shift, but he decided to return to the precinct, and then to an appliance store, to help control the frenzy. Already a handful of officers were inside the store swinging clubs at the dozens of looters ransacking the merchandise. Magno decided that he might accidentally get hit if he went inside, so he positioned himself instead just outside the front door. As each looter exited, bearing a TV or stereo, Magno was there to smash him in the face with a billy club. The looters came out in a long line, and Magno smashed each one. When he found he couldn't in good conscience smash women in the face, he waited until they passed and then he smashed them in the back of the head.

Certain judicial authorities, those with an especially broad view of due process rules, might object to the way Officer Magno brought a measure of justice to the streets that night. But Magno's notion of jurisprudential expediency was shared by many of his fellow officers. Henry Winter, for instance, Magno's partner, once caught a young mugger stealing a woman's handbag. As often happens, the woman refused to get involved in a prosecution. So Winter drove the kid to an isolated pier in Canarsie, took his sneakers, and left him there to find his way home by himself. When Winter later caught the kid a second time, he drove him an hour further away to Jones Beach. There, at three a.m., he took the kid's sneakers, pants, and shirt, and left him standing alone in a parking lot, thereby giving him an opportunity to learn how to travel light. This sort of lesson is known as rehabilitation, which academic penal experts are so much in favor of.

Officers Magno and Winter took similar extralegal measures against drug dealers, as *Newsday* reporter Mike McAlary makes clear in *Buddy Boys: When Good Cops Turn Bad*, a chronicle of cops who steal from the bad guys. The standard procedure was this: Magno, Winter, and other cops on their shift would locate one of the neighborhood drug dens. Then one of the cops would "drop a dime," that is, disguise his voice with a Jamaican accent, dial 911, and report drug activity. When the call went over the police radio, the cops who'd phoned in the fake complaint would volunteer to handle the case. They'd crash into the dealer's apartment, taking care to let as many suspects escape as possible. Then they would scoop up any cash, drugs, guns, or paraphernalia they could find.

If one of the dealers was stupid enough to get caught, a cop might bring him out into the hall and tell him, "Wait here!" Then the cop would go back inside the apartment and the dealer would run away. If a line of drug buyers formed while Magno and Winter were ransacking a dealer's apartment, they'd happily sell bags of crack or dope through the slot. If not, they would split up the cash, sell guns and paraphernalia to a fence, and sell the drugs back to another dealer.

These extralegal incentives turned ordinary frayed police officers into hyperaggressive vigilantes. Suddenly the midnight shift officers of the 77th precinct were crashing through windows and smashing down doors to get to drug dealers. And it worked. Certain drug houses were driven out of business.

The Buddy Boys system—that's what these crooked cops called themselves—was a nascent form of organized crime. As anybody who has lived in a mafia-controlled neighborhood can tell you, it is far safer to live in a section controlled by organized crime than in one plagued by disorganized crime (so long as you don't want to be a mafioso). Nevertheless I didn't finish *Buddy Boys* thinking that cops in the future should be paid on commission, for crimes against the bad guys set the precedent for crimes that were indiscriminate. Soon cops in the 77th were taking payoffs from favorite dealers, robbing victims, taking government cheese intended for the poor. There was no glory in being virtuous for the cops on the midnight shift, and no disgrace in being a crook.

Buddy Boys is a typical newspaperman's book. After sensationalizing the crime, McAlary comes close to excusing the criminal. Almost all his sources were members of the Buddy Boys gang, and as they tell it corruption in Bed-Stuy is practically inevitable. "I was robbing a lowlife," Winter told McAlary. "A drug dealer. Someone who shouldn't be there to begin with. The law couldn't touch these guys. If we caught them they just went down and paid the fines. They could afford the fines. Hell, they were making money hand and foot."

One of the corrupt officers, Brian O'Regan, committed suicide on the day he was to be arraigned. "They put us in a cesspool and expected us to swim," he wrote in his suicide note.

What is most troubling about *Buddy Boys* is that the rationalizations seem so persuasive. After all, the Buddy Boys *did* put some drug dens out of business, and what drug traffic they permitted (or participated in) was funneled to "responsible" dealers. (With the influx into Bed-Stuy of Uzi-toting Jamaican thugs who seem to enjoy murder, "responsible" drug dealers are easier to identify, and will seem more and more an attractive option.)

Of course, none of the rationalizations justifies vigilanteism by police officers. Civilization still stands for something. But in places like Bedford-Stuyvesant, it is standing for less and less. □

David Brooks is book editor of the Wall Street Journal.

CORRESPONDENCE

(continued from page 9)

trade," by the Pope and other leading Catholics with a ridiculous nostalgia for medieval "communalism," and by many on the right who have been gulled by Marx to fear science as somehow against us, this death wish is nearly as lethal as the liberal death wish that palsies our intellectual and moral culture.

Forget Afghanistan. Without radical advances in technology we cannot even save America. Thank God that this technological advance is well under way.

Made in the image of our creator, we are creators ourselves or we decline and fall. The utter bankruptcy of socialism is that it is impotent to create; it can only steal and destroy. Cuban socialism and militarism are not Cuban; they are merely evil.

America's main creative asset today is technology. We are not doing very much in the way of replenishing Kirk's library: in general, our current literature is dominated by Coogler laureates and Pulitzer panders, our philosophy is petty and obscurantist, our religion is led by a clerisy of socialist poseurs, our art and music are mostly either infantile or pornographic, our leading universities are temples of secular ignorance and nihilism, and our politics are chiefly an auction of influence peddlers catering to the greed of sloths.

Nonetheless, American nerds, wonks, and boat people, working 70-hour weeks and disdaining the claims of jaded high culture and effete politics, have given us an incomparable glory: a science that overthrows the deadly superstitions of Newtonian materialism and a technology that not only ascends the highest spires of human genius and art but also inherently favors the forces of freedom and faith. As conservatives we should embrace it with all our hearts.

But first we must comprehend it as our own and see its larger meanings. It has nothing to do with trivial gadgetry. It is a powerful force of creative destruction that entirely obsoletes all brands of leftism. At the same time, it obsoletes the pursuit of territory, slaves, and secrecy. America's key strategic asset is the stupid and evil belief of the Soviets that they can enhance their power by enslaving territories such as Angola, Nicaragua, Cuba, and Afghanistan, and by nationalizing and sequestering scientists and engineers.

The problem is that the conservative death wish tries to foist these same Soviet obsessions on America: controlling, sequestering, and classifying U.S. technology despite Soviet dominance in every clandestine domain from warheads to poison gases and despite U.S. dominance in the still wide-open realms of microelectronics; seeking out the worst snake pits of the Third World to fight the socialist snakes in their own lair, under the public kibitzing of puff-adder politicians; glorifying revolutionary scum such as Ortega by treating him as a threat and by conducting a five-year debate about him with a Congress and press amplifying every new Communist lie; despairing of the future of freedom because we lose archaic battles for useless land around the world while rapidly winning the people of China; truckling to Gorbachev and his "great" gulag of slaves while smearing the Japanese, Koreans, and other Asians who are the central asset of world capitalism; fearing immigrants in the loony belief that they will contaminate American culture, when the problem, friends—look around you, glom that TV, check out those candidates, native-born all—is in ourselves; and as in all our history, immigrants must be our salvation.

Conservative values make possible the triumph of technology and give it meaning and worth. But conservative values alone will not intercept SS-18s or identify and kill terrorists. That takes new and constantly improving technology, and it takes a society that celebrates the disciplines and creators of new technology, including the Japanese, and trusts the values of freedom and openness that have given us the technology we have.

Rah Rah Rahn

Three cheers to Richard Rahn ("Recession Prevention," *TAS*, March 1988), especially for encouraging Congress to cut the tax rate on capital gains. Rahn is right in pointing out that fate doesn't cause recessions, misguided policies do. And taxing capital gains at a higher rate than income is one of the most misguided policies around.

If we want to preserve economic growth and avoid a wrenching recession, we need to bring the capital gains rate down to 15 percent. I have a bill before the Senate now that takes this step. President Reagan recently endorsed it, and it's great to have Richard Rahn's estimable intellectual fire power on our side.

—Robert W. Kasten, Jr.
United States Senate
Washington, D.C.

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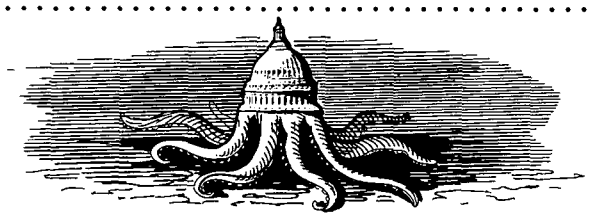
THE CAMPAIGN SPECTATOR



CANARDS OF '88 (SO FAR)

by Victor Gold

Six months to go until the presidential election of 1988 and the canards pile up. Not simply those issuing from the candidates and their campaigns, but those spawned and nurtured by the political cognoscenti, i.e., the reporters, commentators, and expert observers assigned to keep the country abreast of how the race is shaping up.

Thanks to a vigilant news media, the public is well protected against the mis-and-disinformation spread by any errant candidate or member of his staff. But when the cognoscenti misspeak, *quis custodiet ipsos custodes*? Certainly not the candidates. Their complaints about media misstatements are generally dismissed as self-serving and may even, if the candidate persists, be construed as yet another canard (or at the very least, a gaffe) on his part.

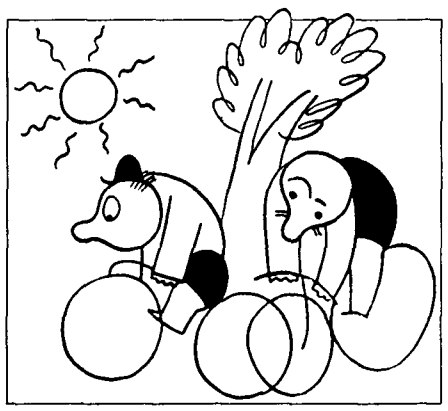
Nevertheless, the people have a right to know—to be reminded—that the reporter, commentator, or expert who now speaks so authoritatively about what can be expected in the months ahead is the same tout who buried George Bush in the Iowa snows and alerted us to the growing groundswell for Bruce Babbitt. With that in mind, as a needed public service, the following is my list of the top ten campaign canards fostered by the cognoscenti, up to early spring, 1988.

1. *George Bush is a wimp, a preppy, a poor campaigner, and, in the words of one Washington columnist, a "lamb" being led to political "slaughter."* Pay no attention to the confessions of error made by Bush's press critics, post–Super Tuesday. This canard is one of their favorites, ranking alongside the one about Ronald Reagan's being only a cue-card-reading Hollywood actor, not someone to be taken seriously. Indeed, next to Reagan, Bush has been the most mis-stereotyped, underrated national candidate of modern times. Give the cognoscenti time to catch their breath, they'll be back hacking and whooping about wimps, preppies, and lambs.

2. *Iran-contra won't go away.* To the extent that the media wish is father to the thought, true. Dan Rather can be expected to beat this dead canard right up to the first Monday in November. But as an issue high on the voters' agenda, Iran-contra has long since gone away, Arthur Lyman's charisma notwithstanding.

3. *In order to win, a presidential candidate must give American voters some idea of his "vision of the country's future."* Wrong. In order to win, a candidate must be able to do more than spout Onward-and-Upward rhetoric, quoting Tocqueville and setting forth his 112-point program to save the nation's infrastructure in the Spirit of the Lady with the Torch. He must know how to organize a campaign, to get the right people into the right places at the right time, and to delegate responsibility, e.g., Bush, Dukakis, both of whom were criticized by the cognoscenti for lacking "vision" but who nevertheless managed to out-distance their rivals.

4. *Mario Cuomo could have won the Democratic nomination hands-down had he entered the race.* Imagine, if you can, Cuomo as a presidential candidate tramping through Iowa, then New Hampshire. To paraphrase what A. J. Liebling once wrote on another subject, New York politicians, like corn, do not travel well. Cuomo's entire national reputation is based on one speech, his keynote at the 1984 Democratic convention. Beyond that, his effectiveness as a national politician, like Ted Kennedy's before 1980, is a matter of media conjecture, no more. And we know what happened to Kennedy and his "vision."



5. *Pat Robertson, with his "invisible army," will be a factor to be reckoned with in the South.* Last uttered and written on the Monday before Super Tuesday, when the "invisible army" turned out to be just that. To the media, Robertson was the John Anderson of the '88 campaign, the random variable who gave a subplot to the Republican story line. Not that Robertson doesn't have a following; but his impact on the race was vastly overrated, like Anderson's eight years ago.

6. *Jesse Jackson has "matured" as a candidate and broadened his appeal to take in non-black voters.* The only difference between the Jesse Jackson of 1988 and the Jesse Jackson of 1984 is that he's ridden out the "Hymietown" storm (without recanting the sentiments expressed) and succeeded in sensitizing his opponents and the press on the subject of "racism," i.e., any criticism of the Jackson candidacy, in any respect, is, *ipso facto*, "racist." As for Jackson's "broadened" base, the only evidence offered to support this thesis is that he carried anywhere from seven to ten percent of the white vote in certain primary and caucus states. Republican presidential candidates have carried that percentage of the country's black vote in virtually every election this century, and no one has yet to describe that as a "broadened" base.

7. *Jack Kemp will be Bush's foremost rival for the Republican nomination.* The accepted wisdom in Washington media circles for the past seven years, despite the fact that Kemp couldn't seem to break out of single-digits in his appeal to registered Republican voters. In the wake of Kemp's dropping out of the race, the experts are left to wonder what went wrong. The explanation now given is that the candidate suffered from lack of name recognition in states like Iowa, as if Jimmy Carter in 1976 and George Bush in 1980 were household words when they won that caucus vote. If there's an answer, it's that Kemp's entire campaign was based on making the leap from congressman to the White House with no intermediate step. Had he taken that extra step, a Governor Kemp or Senator Kemp from New York state could have been a formidable candidate to oppose, even for a sitting Vice President.

8. *Elizabeth Dole would be just the running mate George Bush needs.* Published, with a straight face, by *Time* magazine *after* Super Tuesday. Where do the experts get these harebrained notions? Imagine now, if you can, a campaign in which the presidential candidate doesn't have to answer merely for the divergent statements of his running mate, but of her husband's as well. You know—amiable Bob, everybody's team-player.

9. *The latest Gallup poll says. . . .* Fill in the blanks, any campaign, any year, chances are good you've got a canard. When Gallup was caught with its polls down in 1948, predicting a Dewey victory, the explanation was that they had failed to track the numbers right up to election day and missed the shift to Truman. Forty years later Gallup predicted an overwhelming victory for Dole in the New Hampshire primary. When the victory went to Bush, guess what Gallup's explanation was? They had failed to track, etc. Not that Gallup is the only pollster off the mark in his predictions. A *Washington Post*-ABC survey in late March showed Dukakis, whose name—not to mention his record—is hardly known in the South, Southwest, and Far West, defeating Bush. Where does *Post*-ABC do its polling? Boston Common? All of which added up to the fact that unlike the Bourbons, who learned nothing and forgot nothing, our political pollsters have learned nothing and forgotten everything.

10. *George Bush is the candidate the Democrats most want to run against in 1988.* And Ronald Reagan was the candidate Democrats most wanted to run against in 1980. They were right, too. Reagan, after all, was nothing but a cue-card-reading Hollywood actor . . . □

Victor Gold is The American Spectator*'s national correspondent.*

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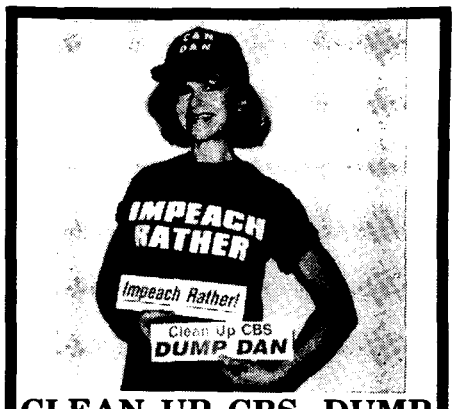

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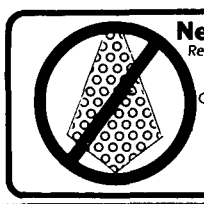

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THE PROPHETS OF OCTOBER 19

Half a year after the historic Stock Market Kaboom of 1987, and upon receiving word that what was then fifty-nine straight months of economic growth is now sixty-five straight months of economic growth, *The American Spectator* in the best tradition of investigative journalism reprints the funeral announcements from the Kaboom's immediate aftermath. Incidentally, the Consumer Price Index rose a mere 0.23 percent for the month of February, and the GNP rose 4.8 percent for the final quarter of '87—not bad for Reaganomics six months after the crash, eh?:

Newsweek

News story titled, "Panic of '87":

If it felt like the end of a world, that's because it was: last week's global crash has created a whole new financial reality. . . . In disquieting echoes of Herbert Hoover, Reagan and his men proclaimed that "the economic fundamentals in this country remain sound."

[November 2, 1987]

New York Times

An editorial:

In a statement issued last night, the White House asserted that the "underlying economy remains sound." With the fire alarm wailing on Wall Street and the country anxious for leadership, it gets an astonishing rerun of Herbert Hoover. When will Mr. Reagan start fighting the fire?

[October 20, 1987]

New York Times

Robert B. Reich, a professor:

The binge is over. It couldn't go on forever—the quick fortunes, the midnight raids and computer driven program trades, the junk bonds, poison pills, leveraged buyouts, options—all the glitz and glamour, the danger and thrill. It's over. . . .

But now it's morning and the binge seems to be over. Many have hangovers. Many have worse. The jackasses are clearly identifiable. And the rest of us, who pretended not to notice, are left with the job of cleaning up the mess.

[October 22, 1987]

New York Times

Anthony Lewis, Boston:

The noise you heard was not just the crash of the market. It was the crumbling of public support for Ronald Reagan.

In a moment of frightening crisis, the President of the United States was treated as essentially irrelevant. The financial experts and politicians who appeared on television, people of both parties, showed no expectation of leadership from Mr. Reagan. It was as if they were embarrassed to mention his name.

The reason for the disregard is no great mystery. Practically no one in this country, not even those who admire Mr. Reagan as a person, thinks he has any sense of economic reality. . . .

The age of Reagan is over now, no matter what happens.

[October 22, 1987]

Washington Post

Michael Kinsley dons his green eyeshade and takes the high road:

Imagine if the president and Congress had agreed last summer to cut the federal deficit by $60 billion. Let's say they did it through a 20-cent-a-gallon gasoline tax for about $20 billion, trimming middle class entitlements another $20 billion (ending the tax exemption for Social Security payments is almost enough to do this alone), and raising tax rates one percent for another $20 billion or so. That may not be an ideally fair and efficient formula. It's just one of many possible variations on the theme of getting America's appetites back under control.

The point is this: can anyone doubt that such an achievement would have prevented the crash? . . .

Conservatives like to accuse liberals of a "Beltway mentality"—a removal from the reality that lies outside the golden circle. But inside the Beltway is where the blinding mist of Reaganism has been the thickest. Conservatives actually thought they had abolished the Phillips Curve. That much-mocked concept, which holds there's a tradeoff between avoiding inflation and avoiding recession, also expresses the broader principle that economic policy choices cannot be pain-free. The Phillips Curve is about to boomerang upon us with a vengeance.

For years the doom-and-gloomers have had to endure the taunt: "What do you know that the stock market doesn't?" (Or, "If you're so smart, how come everyone else is getting rich?") Nevertheless, this is hardly an occasion for gloating.

[October 21, 1987]

Washington Post

Miss Mary McGrory, teetotaler:

The usual way of handling crises at the White House—at least since Herbert Hoover—has been for the president to call in the wise men to the Oval Office, sit them down and tell them to fix it.

That is not Ronald Reagan's style. . . .

The first day, he shouted that the economy was in good shape. The second day, he said it was all Congress' fault. The third day, he said that only people who refused to buy—and, of course, the press—could bring on a recession. Embarrassed aides were explaining that his "Who-me, what-crisis?" approach was a considered strategy to avert panic. . . .

But the financial community is ready to admit that it is the morning after the biggest binge in its history. The president hates to say the party's over.

[October 22, 1987]

Newsweek

H. Ross Perot, too:

We are on a nonstop binge, punishing our economy. It's outrageous that our elected officials say the fundamentals of the economy are sound; *none* of the fundamentals are sound.

[November 2, 1987]

Philadelphia Inquirer

And the editorial writers:

Five years of economic prosperity, in which unemployment has steadily dropped while inflation has remained surprisingly low, has infused much of the nation with a false sense of well-being.

[October 20, 1987]

Washington Post

Hobart Rowen, ironist:

In a sense, it was the Reagan Revolution come full circle: the excesses of the past six years, visible in deficits near $200 billion a year in both the budget and trade, couldn't go on forever. . . .

Now, the joy ride is over, but so far, the staggering record stock market collapse . . . has been met with government denial reminiscent of 1929. . . . "The economy is fundamentally sound," said Treasury Secretary James A. Baker III. And President Reagan, who gives every evidence of being totally out of touch with reality, told reporters: "I don't know what meaning it might have, all the business indexes are up—there's nothing wrong with the economy."

[October 21, 1987]

Time

Lance Morrow, poet-in-residence:

A political scientist, Michael Nelson, has observed that the Presidents from Franklin Roosevelt to John Kennedy were generally portrayed as Saviors. Johnson and Nixon were cartooned as Satans, and Ford and Carter as Samsons—weak Presidents shorn of their strength. Reagan seems to invite the thought that he has found a new model, the Salesman, in the last act, standing on a stage about to go dark.

[November 9, 1987]

New York Times

Dr. Hyman P. Minsky, another professor:

Although the huge financial shakeout we have just experienced was not inevitable, it was to some extent predictable. As 20th century history shows, a period of conservative Republican dominance leads to a failed capitalism, while a period of liberal Democratic dominance creates and sustains the conditions for successful capitalism.

[October 22, 1987]

Newsweek

Clairvoyant John Kenneth Galbraith, *con brio*:

This debacle marks the last chapter of Reaganomics. . . . In 1929 every high member of the Hoover administration rushed to say that the economy was "fundamentally sound." That is exactly what I seem to be hearing these days. They seem to have dug out the old script. The prospect of the present administration doing anything is hampered by the fact that it believes that God is a Republican and will handle things.

[November 2, 1987]

Washington Post

And even today, the true believers still believe:

Galbraith is uncharacteristically modest about his predictive powers. "It requires neither courage nor prescience to predict disaster," he writes on the first page of "The Great Crash: 1929," which Houghton Mifflin is reissuing this month. Still, in a clairvoyant article in the *Atlantic* last winter, nine months before the crash of 1987, Galbraith set out what he saw to be alarming parallels to 1928 . . .

[March 30, 1988]

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1988...
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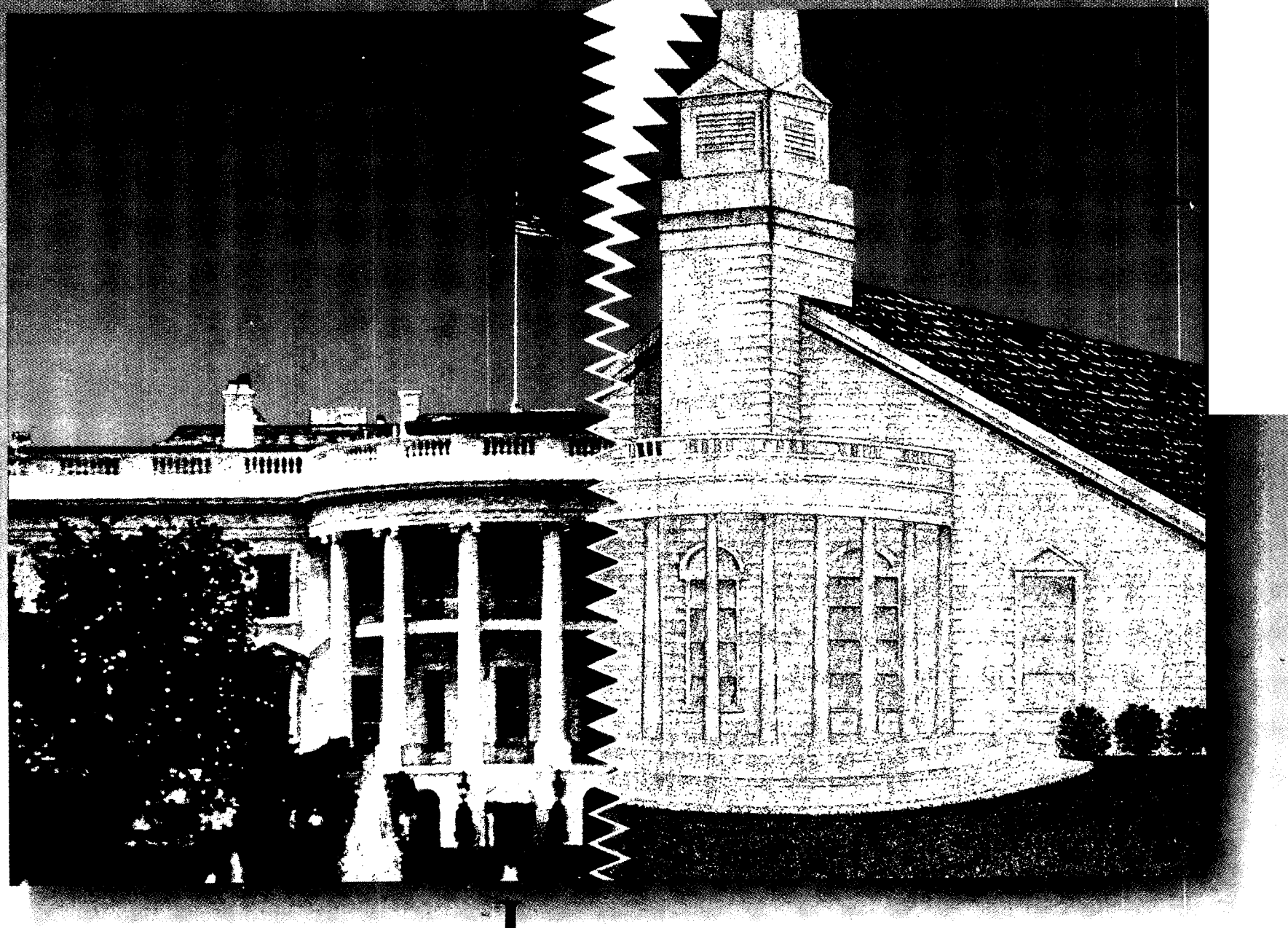

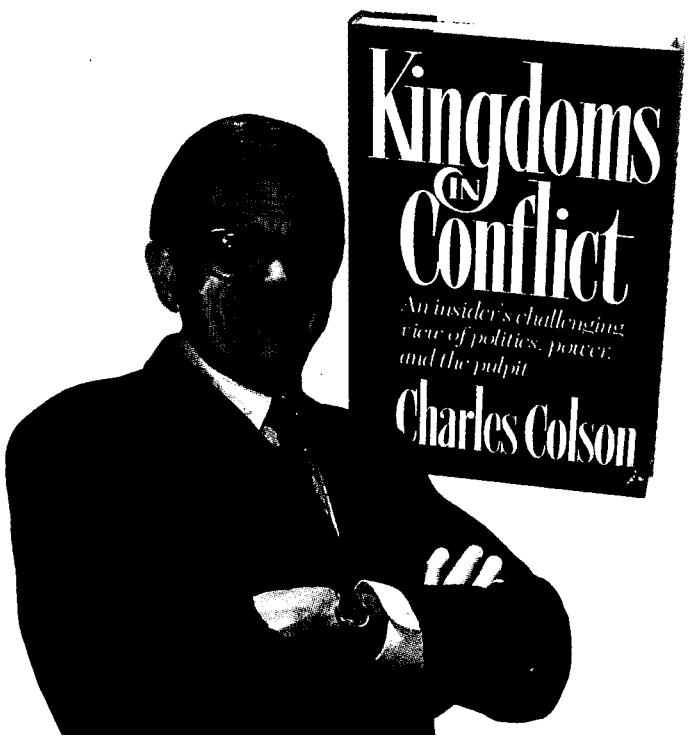

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